

PART SIX

Complete in about 40 Parts

N

tralia  
and 1/-

# THE GREAT WAR. I WAS THERE!

UNDYING MEMORIES OF 1914-1918

Edited by

**SIR JOHN  
HAMMERTON**

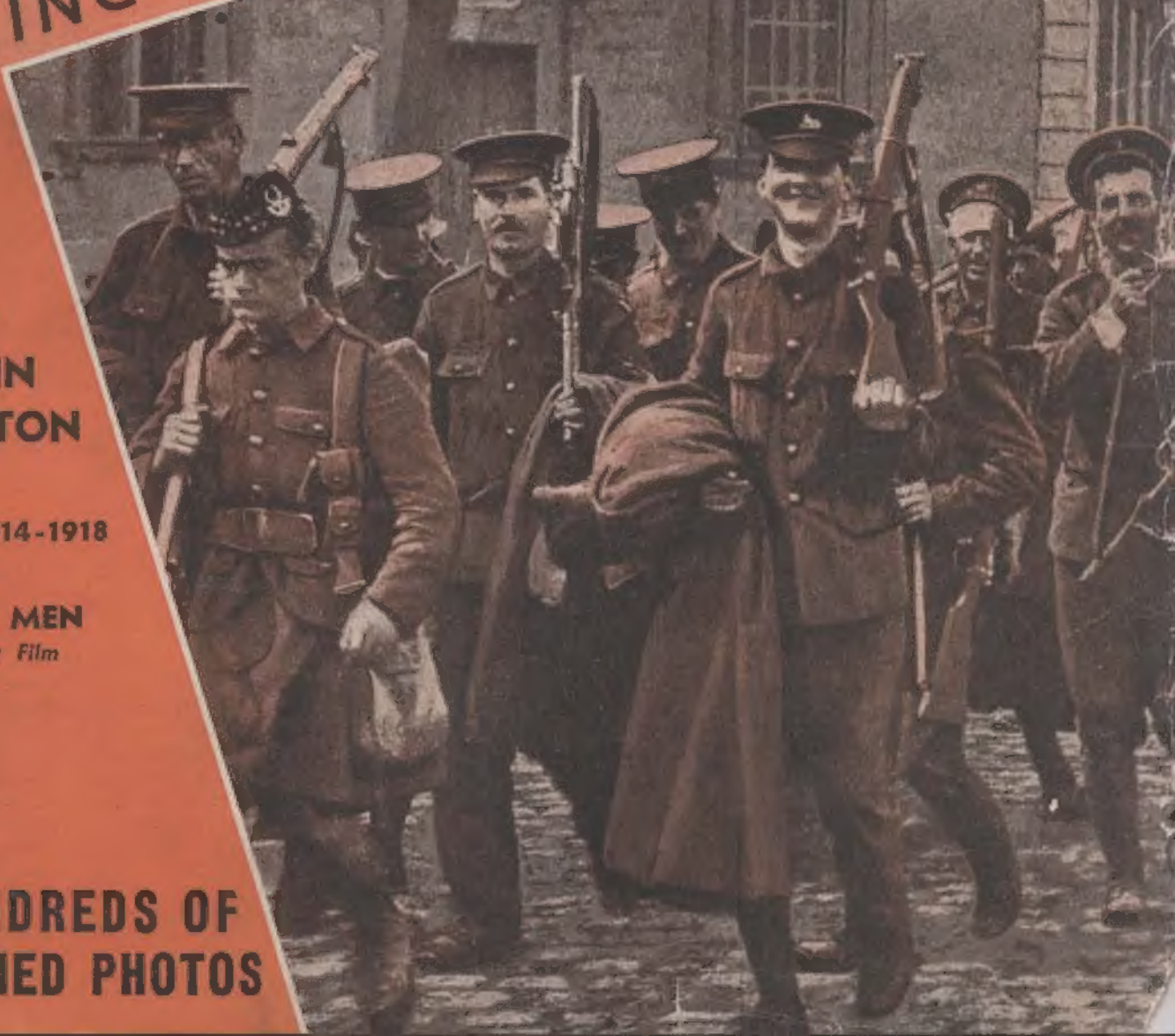
Editor of

**WORLD WAR 1914-1918**

Writer of

**FORGOTTEN MEN**

*The Famous War Film*



**MANY HUNDREDS OF  
UNPUBLISHED PHOTOS**



## LITERARY CONTENTS OF THIS PART

### With Acknowledgements to Authors and Publishers

WEEK by week we acknowledge here our indebtedness to the many authors and publishers without whose courteous permission to reprint selected pages from the books written and published by them the compilation of the present work could not have been achieved. In our volumes as finally bound these acknowledgements will be repeated in the preliminary pages.

45. FRENCH'S 'WORST HALF-HOUR'  
from CAPT. H. FITZ M. STACKE'S "The Worcestershire Regiment in the Great War"  
*By permission of the Worcestershire County War Memorial*
46. I SAW THE TRAGEDY OF CORONEL  
By J. D. STEPHENSON, H.M.S. Glasgow  
*Specially contributed to this work*
47. BLOOD BATH OF LONDON SCOTS  
By PTE. HERBERT DE HAMEL  
*By permission, from the "London Scottish Gazette"*
48. NEW LIGHT ON THE EMDEN  
By LEWIS R. FREEMAN  
*Specially contributed to this work*

49. THE STARK HORROR OF SANCTUARY WOOD  
from CPL. JOHN F. LUCY'S "There's a Devil in the Drum"  
*Publishers: Messrs. Faber & Faber, Ltd., 24, Russell Square, W.C.1*
50. REVENGE! I SAW VON SPEE MEET HIS DOOM  
from ADMIRAL THE HON. BARRY BINGHAM'S "Falklands, Jutland and the Bight"  
*Publisher: John Murray, 40, Albermarle Street, London, W.1*

## Leaves from the Editor's Note-Book

John Carpenter House, London, E.C.4

THIS page in my Note-Book has been held back a little so that I might be able to include a remark on the reception by the public of the first part of THE GREAT WAR: I WAS THERE. As I most confidently expected, it has been hailed with enthusiasm on all sides and, of course, with particular satisfaction on the part of those who served actively in one capacity or another on one of the fighting fronts, on the sea, or in the air. Members of the British Legion have hailed our very human story of the War with especial delight. In fact, I am told of a branch meeting where Part I seriously interfered with the business. It certainly looks as if, taken in conjunction with the unsettled note of these war-ridden days, my new publication meets a very real psychological need.

OUR publishers are making special efforts to keep pace with the demand, and there should be no difficulty in obtaining copies. As I have remarked before in connexion with other of our weekly part publications, there is a real advantage for the reader, when he has made up his mind to take in a new publication of this sort, in giving a definite order to his newsagent for the whole series. It is only by a steady demand, known in advance of publication, that the publishers are able to produce serial publications at the very low prices charged.

ON the human side of my new work I have been making some very interesting inquiries. In Part V, for instance, in Canon Foster's exciting chapter on the Antwerp Adventure, I have included a photograph of a company of the Howe Battalion of the R.N.V.R. In order to make certain beyond a doubt that this photograph was correctly described, it was

thought desirable to write to the headquarters of the Sussex Division at Hove, since almost every face in the photograph was recognizable, and almost certainly, if any mistake were made in its description, some surviving member of the Battalion would rise up to discredit me. It was very pleasing to receive a reply from the famous racing motorist, Earl Howe, who was in 1914 in command of the battalion named after his great naval ancestor. Lord Howe checked our statements and said in addition that he actually recognized men in the photograph, including Petty Officer Eridge—"a very fine fellow who was afterwards killed at Gallipoli." I am deliberately reproducing photographs of this sort in a good size, so that they may be in fact easily recognizable by friends and survivors of the wartime period.

PERHAPS an even more remarkable example of the appeal of the individual and personal photograph in relation to our human story of the War is the very striking double page photograph which appears in the centre of Part VI, showing what are styled by the Imperial War Museum as "Remnants of the London Scottish after the Battle near Messines." This photograph, when considered with the thrilling extract from Mr. Herbert de Hamel's article, which was originally published in the *London Scottish Gazette*, possesses a really dramatic appeal.

I WAS so struck with it that I thought it desirable to find out more about it, and once again, by taking a good deal of trouble, I was able, with the friendly assistance of the Editor of the *London Scottish Gazette* at their headquarters, to identify and name no fewer than five men now alive, who are seen war-stained, unshaven and weary after they emerged from the "blood bath" of the action at Wytchaete, where the London Scottish, the first London Territorial battalion to engage the enemy, fought to the bitter end against the fiercest German attacks around Messines in the first great battle of Ypres.

[Continued in page iii of this wrapper]



#### **WHEN THE BEST NEWS WAS HOME NEWS**

In the pauses of battle the two things that mattered most to Tommy were rations and letters, and there were but few men who would not rather have had their letters from home than their rations. Here, during the first battle of Ypres, in October 1914, the mail is being distributed to men of the 19th Infantry Brigade at a roadside farmhouse. They wanted all the news from home, though a "field postcard" might be all the reply they could make.

*Imperial War Museum*



#### **AWAITING YET ANOTHER CALL**

*Pilkington*

The nightmare of war was but in its early stages when this picture of men of the famous Oxford & Bucks Light Infantry was taken. While shrapnel, hurled by enemy batteries, scatters near by, the troops take cover with easy nonchalance behind a house used as Brigade headquarters. Later, following urgent orders, a company of this regiment, with others of the Royal Sussex, rushed forward to stem the German attempt to enfilade the British trenches during the first battle of Ypres.



We were lying down when the order came, and as we lay we got round at our bayonets, drew them and fixed them, and I could hear the rattle of the fixing all along the line, just as I had heard it many times on parade or at manoeuvres—the same sound, but with what a different purpose!

**A** FEW of the fellows did not fix their bayonets as we lay, but they managed to do it as we ran, when we had jumped up and started to rush along to put the finish to the fight. There was no bugle sound, we just got the word to charge, an order which was given to the whole of the Seventh Division.

When this last part of the advance arrived we started halloaing and shouting, and the division simply hurled itself against the Prussian Guard. By the time we were up with the enemy we were mad. I can't tell you much of what actually happened—and I don't think any man who took part in it could do so—but I do know that we rushed helter-skelter, and that when we got up to the famous Guards there were only two of my own section holding together—Lance-Corporal Perry and myself, and even we were parted immediately afterwards.

The next thing I clearly knew was that we were actually on the Prussians, and that there was some very fierce work going on. There was some terrific and deadly scrimmaging, and whatever the Prussian Guard did in the way of handling the steel, the Seventh Division did better.

It was every man for himself. I had rushed up with the rest, and the first thing I clearly knew was that a tremendous Prussian was making at me with his villainous bayonet. I made a lunge at him as hard and swift as I could, and he did the same to me. I thought I had him, but I just missed, and as I did so I saw his own long, ugly blade driven out at the end of his rifle. Before I could do anything to parry the thrust, the tip of the bayonet had ripped across my right thigh, and I honestly thought that it was all up with me.

**T**HEN, when I reckoned that my account was paid, when I supposed that the huge Prussian had it all his own way, one of our chaps—I don't know who, I don't suppose I ever shall; but I bless him—rushed up, drove his bayonet into the Prussian and settled him. I am sure that if this had not been done I should have been killed by the Prussian; as it was, I was able to get away without much inconvenience at the end of the bayonet fight.

This struggle lasted about half an hour, and fierce, hard work it was all

the time. In the end we drove the Guards away and sent them flying—all except those who had fallen; the trench was full of the latter, and we took no prisoners.

Then soon we were forced to retire ourselves, for the quite sufficient reason that we were not strong enough to hold the position that we had taken at such a heavy cost. The enemy did not know it then, though perhaps they found out later, that we had nicely deceived them in making them believe that we had reinforcements. But we had nothing of the sort; yet we had stormed and taken the position and driven its defenders away.

#### GROUND LITTERED WITH DEAD

**W**E were far too weak to hold the position, and so we retired over the ground that we had won, getting back a great deal faster than we had advanced. We had spent the best part of the day in advancing and reaching the enemy's position; and it seemed as if we must have covered a great tract of country, but as a matter of fact we had advanced

less than a mile. It had taken us many hours to cover that short distance, but along the whole of the long line of the advance the ground was littered with the fallen—the officers and men who had gone down under such a storm of shells and bullets as had not been known since the war began.

**R**ETIRING, we took up a position behind a wood, and were thinking that we should get a bit of a rest, when a German aeroplane came flying over us, gave our hiding-place away, and brought upon us a fire that drove us out and sent us back to three lines of trenches which we had been occupying.

We made the best of things during the evening and the night in the trenches. The next day things were reversed, for the Germans came on against us; but we kept up a furious fight, and simply mowed them down as they threw themselves upon us. We used to say: "Here comes another bunch of 'em!" and then we gave them the "mad minute." We had

#### TINNED GIFTS FOR THE ENEMY

When munitions were short, British Tommies proved themselves men of resource, and they improvised hand grenades from empty tobacco tins, which were just the right size and made a very effective missile. Jam tins were also used. The tins were filled with a high explosive such as ammonal, and nails or any scrap metal that was available. Here a fuse is being fitted to a home-made grenade.

L.N.A.





#### WHAT NEWS OF OUR WAR?

It was one of the ironies of war that the men in the front line knew less of its real progress than those at home who had never seen a shot fired. To such men as those seen in this photograph the war news was that of their own sector; an attack met and repulsed; a word of mouth casualty list. It was only when newspapers came from home that they knew the war news that really mattered, the real progress made. These men of the 7th Division are eagerly reading the last papers from home during a wayside halt near Ypres during the tense days of October 1914.

*Imperial War Museum*

suffered heavily on the 31st, and we were to pay a big bill on this November 1, amongst our casualties being two of our senior officers.

**T**HE second day of the fighting passed and the third came. Still we held on, but it became clear that we were too hopelessly outnumbered to hope for complete success at the time, and so we were forced to leave the trenches. Withdrawing again, we took up positions in farmhouses and woods and any other places that gave shelter. All the time there was a killing fire upon us, and it happened that entire bodies of men would be wiped out in a few moments. A party of the Warwicks got into a wood near us, and they had no sooner taken shelter than the German gunners got the range of them, shelled them, and killed nearly all of them.

There was not a regiment of the Glorious Seventh that had not suffered

terribly in the advance during the three days' fateful fighting. The Bedfords had lost, all told, about 600, and it was a mere skeleton of the battalion that formed up when the roll was called.

I became a member of the grenade company of the battalion, which was something like going back to the early days of the Army, when the grenadier companies of the regiments flung their little bombs at the enemy. So did we, and grim work it was, hurling home-made bombs, which had the power of doing a terrible amount of mischief.

#### MERRY PARTY SPOILT

**I** WAS with the grenade company, behind a brick wall close to the trenches, and was sitting with several others round a fire which we had made in a biscuit-tin. We were quite a merry party, and had the dixie going to make some tea. There was another dixie on, with two or three nice chickens that our fellows had got hold of—perhaps

they had seen them wandering about homeless and adopted them.

Anyway, they found a good home in the stew-pot, and we were looking forward to a most cosy meal.

The Germans were close enough to fling hand-bombs at us. They gave us lots of these little attentions, so that, when I suddenly found myself blinded, and felt a sharp pain in my left hand, I thought they had made a lucky shot, or that something had exploded in the fire in the biscuit-tin.

**F**OR some time I did not know what had happened; then I was able to see, and on looking at my hand, I found it to be in a sorry mess, half the thumb and half a finger having been carried away.

I stayed and had some tea from the dixie, and my chums badly wanted me to wait for my share of the chickens; but I had no appetite for fowls just then. I made the best of things till darkness came, and under cover of it a couple of stretcher-bearers took me to the nearest dressing-station.

I suffered terribly, and lockjaw set in, but the splendid medical staff and the nursing saved me, and I was put into a horse ambulance and packed off home.

# FRENCH'S 'WORST HALF-HOUR'

## The Worcesters Saved the Day at Gheluvelt

by Captain H. FitzM. Stacke, M.C.

A GREAT gap was made in the British line when on the morning of October 31 1914, the Germans captured Gheluvelt. As a forlorn hope the 2nd Worcestershire, almost the last available reserve of the whole British defence, were ordered to counter-attack and recapture the village. How three companies of the Worcestershire, charging over open ground through a hail of fire, restored the British line at a time which Sir John French afterwards described as the worst half-hour of his life, is here vividly told by Captain H. FitzM. Stacke, M.C., the historian of the Regiment

**D**AYBREAK of October 31st was calm and clear. The 2nd Worcestershire, in their reserve position west of the Polygon Wood, were roused early by the crash of gun-fire. The troops turned out, breakfasts were cooked and eaten, weapons were cleaned and inspected. Then for several hours the companies lay idle about their billets, listening to the ever-increasing bombardment and watching the German shrapnel bursting in black puffs of smoke above the tree-tops.

The 2nd Worcestershire were almost the last available reserve of the British defence. Nearly every other unit had been drawn into the battle-line or had been broken beyond recovery; and to an onlooker that last reserve would not have seemed very formidable. The battalion could muster not more than 500 men. Ten days of battle had left all ranks haggard, unshaven and unwashed; their uniforms had been soaked in the mud of the Langemarck trenches and torn by the brambles of Polygon Wood; many had lost their puttees or their caps. But their weapons were clean and in good order, they had plenty of ammunition, and three months of war had given them confidence in their fighting power. The short period in reserve had allowed them sleep and food. That crowd of ragged soldiers was still a fighting battalion, officers and men bound together by that proud and willing discipline which is the soul of the regiment.

**H**OUR by hour the thunder of the guns grew more intense. Stragglers and wounded from beyond the wood brought news that a great German attack was in progress. The enemy infantry were coming on in overwhelming numbers [thirteen German battalions took part in this attack, of which six were fresh and at full strength] against the remnants of

the five British battalions, together mustering barely a thousand men, which were holding the trenches about the Menin road.

Before midday weight of numbers had told. The Queen's and the Royal Scots Fusiliers had fought to the last, the Welch and the K.R.R.C. had been overwhelmed, the right flank of the South Wales Borderers had been rolled back. Gheluvelt had been lost, and a great gap had been broken in the British line. Unless that gap could be closed, the British army was doomed to disaster.

**S**O serious was the situation caused by the loss of Gheluvelt that orders were issued for the British artillery to move back in preparation for a general retreat. At the same time it was decided that a counter-attack against the lost position should be made by the 2nd Worcestershire.

Brigadier-General C. FitzClarence, V.C., was in command of the front about the Menin road. Soon after midday he sent for the officers of the 2nd Worcestershire to take orders. Major Hankey sent his Adjutant, Captain B. C. Senhouse Clarke. Twenty minutes later Captain Senhouse Clarke returned, bringing word that the battalion would probably be wanted for a counter-attack, and that meanwhile one company was to be detached to prevent the enemy from advancing up the Menin road.

"A" Company was detailed for the latter duty. Led by Captain P. S. G. Wainman, the company advanced at 12.45 p.m. to a position on the embankment of the light railway north-west of Gheluvelt. The company held the embankment during the following two hours, firing rapidly at such of the enemy as attempted to advance beyond the houses.

**A**BOUT 1 p.m. Major Hankey was summoned by General FitzClarence, and was given definite orders. The 2nd Worcestershire were to make a counter-attack to regain the lost British positions around Gheluvelt. General FitzClarence pointed out the church in Gheluvelt as a landmark for the advance, explained that the situation was desperate and that speed was essential. . . . At 2 p.m. the battalion moved off in file, led by Major Hankey and Captain Thorne, along under cover of the trees to the south-west corner of Polygon Wood [about 1½ miles N. of Gheluvelt].

From that corner of the wood the ground to the south-eastward is clear and open, falling to the little valley of the Rentelbeek and rising again to the bare ridge above Polderhoek. That ridge hid from view the château of Gheluvelt, and the exact situation there was unknown; but further to the right



**MOST GALLANT LEADER**

When, on the last day of October 1914, the British line near Gheluvelt was in direst peril, Brigadier-General C. FitzClarence, V.C., saved the situation by masterly and daring action as told in this chapter. An officer of magnificent spirit, he inspired all who served under him. He was killed while reconnoitring on November 12, 1914.





#### **THERE WERE FIELDS AND HEDGEROWS THEN NEAR YPRES**

The leaves were still on the trees when the British Army first came to the Ypres salient. Defences were rough and ready, such as those above on a road near Ypres, but with machine-guns planted at the other end a barrier of trees could prove a nasty obstacle to the approaching enemy. The unspoiled country afforded, too, excellent cover such as the thick hedge seen below which is being used by two infantrymen.

*Imperial War Museum*



could be seen the church tower rising amid the smoke of the burning village.

The open ground was dotted with wounded and stragglers coming back from the front. In every direction German shells were bursting. British batteries could be seen limbering up and moving to the rear. Everywhere there were signs of retreat. The Worcestershire alone were moving towards the enemy. But the three companies tramped grimly forward down into the valley of the Rentelbeek.

**B**YOND a little wood the battalion deployed, "C" and "D" Companies in front line, with "B" Company in second line behind—about 370 all told. In front of them rose the bare slope of the Polderhoek Ridge. The ridge was littered with dead and wounded, and along its crest the enemy's shells were bursting in rapid succession. Major Hankey decided that the only way of crossing that deadly stretch of ground was by one long rush. The companies extended into line and advanced.

The ground underfoot was rank grass or rough stubble. The two leading companies broke into a steady double and swept forward across the open, the officers leading on in front, and behind them their men with fixed bayonets in one long irregular line. As they reached the crest, the rushing wave of bayonets was sighted by the hostile infantry beyond.

A storm of shells burst along the ridge, shrapnel bullets rained down and high-explosive shells crashed into the charging line. Men fell at every pace; over a hundred of the battalion were killed or wounded: the rest dashed on. The speed of the rush increased as on the downward slope the troops came in sight of Gheluvelt château close in front. The platoons scrambled across the light railway, through some hedges and wire fences, and then in the grounds of the château they closed with the enemy.

#### **THEY GAVE WAY AT OUR CHARGE**

**T**HE enemy were ill-prepared to meet the charge. The German infantry were crowded in disorder among the trees of the park, their attention divided between exploring the outhouses and surrounding the remnant of the British defenders; for the musketry of the defence still swept the lawn in front of the château. The enemy's disorder was increased by a sharp and accurate fire of shrapnel from British batteries behind Polygon Wood.

The Germans were young troops of newly formed units. Probably they had lost their best leaders earlier in the day,



for they made no attempt to stand their ground and face the counter-attack. They gave way at once before the onslaught of the British battalion and crowded back out of the grounds of the château into the hedgerows behind. Shooting and stabbing, "C" Company of the Worcestershire charged across the lawn and came up into line with the gallant remnant of the South Wales Borderers.

The South Wales Borderers had made a wonderful stand. All day they had held their ground at the château, and they were still stubbornly fighting, although almost surrounded by the enemy. Their resistance had delayed and diverted the German advance, and the success of the counter-attack was largely due to their brave defence.

**T**HE meeting of the two battalions was unexpected. The Worcestershire had not known that any of the South Wales Borderers were still holding out. Major Hankey went over to their commander, and found him to be Colonel H. E. Burleigh Leach, an old friend. "My God, fancy meeting you here!" said Major Hankey, and Colonel Burleigh Leach replied quietly, "Thank God, you have come."

The routed enemy were hunted out of the hedges and across the open fields beyond the château. "C" and "D" Companies of the Worcestershire took up positions in the sunken road which runs past the grounds. "B" Company was brought up and prolonged the line to the right.

But the village of Gheluvelt, on the slope above the right flank, was still in the enemy's hands. Most of the

German troops in the village seem to have been drawn northwards by the fighting around the château, but a certain number of Saxons of the 242nd Regiment had remained in the village, whence they opened a fire which took the sunken road in enfilade. To silence that fire Major Hankey sent fighting patrols from the front line into the village. Those patrols drove back the German snipers and took some prisoners; but it became clear that the position in the sunken road would be unsafe until the village was secured. Accordingly, Major Hankey sent orders to Captain Wainman that "A" Company were to advance from their defensive position and occupy the village.

Captain Wainman led forward his company and, after some sharp fighting among burning buildings and bursting shells, occupied a new line with his left flank in touch with the right of the position in the sunken road and his right flank in the village, holding the church and the churchyard. Thence he sent forward patrols to clear the village. . . .

**I**T was not possible permanently to occupy the centre of the village, for it was being bombarded by both the German and the British artillery. On all sides houses were burning, roofs falling and walls collapsing. The stubborn Saxons still held some small posts in scattered houses of the south-eastern outskirts. Nevertheless, the enemy's main force had been driven out, and

the peril of a collapse of the British defence about the Menin road had been averted. . . .

About 6 p.m. came fresh orders from General FitzClarence. The General had decided to withdraw his defensive line from the forward slope of the ridge at Gheluvelt to a new position farther back at Veldhoek, where the trenches would be sheltered from direct observation of the German artillery.

**A**RRANGEMENTS were made in conjunction with the South Wales Borderers, and the retirement was begun. One by one, at intervals of ten minutes, the companies withdrew from their positions. In the darkness they assembled under cover and then tramped back along the Menin road to Veldhoek. . . . As the last company of the 2nd Worcestershire marched back out of the village, several of the houses were still burning, and the darkness was torn at intervals by the blaze of bursting shells. . . .

The day's fighting had cost the 2nd Worcestershire a third of the Battalion's remaining strength, for 187 of all ranks had been killed or wounded; but their achievement had been worthy of that sacrifice. Their counter-attack had thrown back the enemy at a moment which the British Commander-in-Chief afterwards called "the worst half-hour of my life." In all probability that counter-attack saved Ypres from capture and the British army from defeat.

#### HIGHWAY OF IMPERISHABLE MEMORIES

Through the village of Gheluvelt (Geluvelt) stretches the Menin road, seen here as it is today. It was along this highway that so much terrible fighting took place in 1914, and later in the third battle of Ypres in 1917. By their magnificent attack and routing of the enemy from Gheluvelt men of the Worcestershire Regiment earned undying fame in the annals of the B.E.F.—and ended French's "worst half-hour."

*Photo, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.*



# I SAW the TRAGEDY of CORONEL

by J. D. Stephenson

Sick Berth Steward, H.M.S. Glasgow



## HE FOUGHT TO A FINISH

At the Battle of Coronel Admiral Sir Christopher Cradock maintained the highest traditions of the Royal Navy. It was of him and his comrades that Mr. Arthur Balfour, then First Lord of the Admiralty, said: "Theirs is an immortal place in the great roll of naval heroes."

*Elliott and Fry*

**O**UR commission on the South American station was just ending when the news that war had been declared reached us. Jack always likes to bring some mementoes home of his voyages, and in anticipation of an early return to England our men had been ashore at Rio de Janeiro buying curios. Parrots galore screamed on our mess-deck, all ditty-boxes were packed with gifts for friends at home, and the men were light-heartedly talking of the good times they would have in dear old "Pompey," when the fateful message arrived that swept away those rosy visions and put the grim visage of war before our faces.

Were we disappointed? Not at all! A sailor's business is to fight, and nothing better fits his humour than a chance of doing so. The knowledge that the long-expected "scrap" with Germany had come at last filled us all on board the Glasgow with pleasurable excitement, and the orders to "clear for action" were joyfully obeyed. The parrots were liberated, all other disposable gear got rid of, and we put to sea ready for anything that might come along.

**F**OR two months we had a disappointing time. Although we searched hard we found nothing in the shape of an enemy. Then we captured a prize worth a quarter of a million, and that sent our spirits up with a bound. About this time we received information that the German cruiser Dresden, having

sunk a British merchantman, was making her way from the Moroccan coast towards the south-east coast of America. Off we went after her.

So far we had been cruising alone. Now the Monmouth joined us, and glad we were to see her, as she was the first vessel of our Fleet that we had encountered for a very long time. Followed by the Monmouth we proceeded to Santa Cattarina, six hundred miles to the north, where we heard the Dresden was coaling. On the way there we got into touch with the Good Hope, commanded by Admiral Sir Christopher Cradock.

At Santa Cattarina we found no trace of the Dresden. The message we had received was a German wireless "fake." Together with the Good Hope and the Monmouth we turned our bows south, and searched for the enemy in every likely hiding-place until we came to Port Edgar, in the Falkland Isles, where we stayed a few days.

## LURED ACROSS THE SEAS

**H**ERE the rumour came to us that the Dresden had gone to South America; therefore we made for Punta Arenas, the most southerly town on the mainland. "She has gone towards Cape Horn," was the news that greeted us there, and off we dashed after her. Some two days later we entered a place where our quarry was supposed to be hiding, but again she had eluded us. Everybody felt a bit sick at this.

Apparently the admiral did also, for he signalled to the squadron, "The admiral shares with the officers and ship's companies of the squadron their great disappointment at not being brought into action. Nevertheless, the capture of the enemy is but a matter of time." His statement proved true, but the time was a long one, and the Dresden was to lure us over many weary miles yet.

Leaving the chilly neighbourhood of Punta Arenas we went up the west coast. It was about this time we learned that the German armoured cruisers Scharnhorst and Gneisenau had been driven from Chinese waters by the Japanese, and were on the way to South America. In order to meet these powerful opponents we understood that we were to be reinforced by stronger units of our own Fleet, as all our squadron were small vessels.

Continuing our search of the coast, we arrived at Valparaiso, where we stayed for twenty-four hours in order to provision and get mails, none of which had reached us for two months. From Valparaiso we went southward again, and called at Coronel, where several German ships were interned. As we entered this harbour at night a boat shot shoreward from one of the German vessels, and half an hour later a fire blazed up on one of the hills close by. "That's a signal to some enemy ship outside!" exclaimed one of our men, and undoubtedly his surmise was right. Little did we think at the time what that signal meant or what a mournful tragedy the morrow held in store for us.

**L**EAVING Coronel at 10 a.m. we picked up the Good Hope, the Monmouth, and the Otranto in about two hours. A very rough sea was running at the time. Boats could not be lowered, and papers for the admiral had to be conveyed to the Good Hope in a small cask, which was towed across her bows. While doing this we came close to the Good Hope and got our last clear look at her crew, although none of us at the time thought that we were bidding our comrades in the flagship a last farewell.

Knowing the enemy to be somewhere in the vicinity, Admiral Cradock opened his squadron to visual distance. The Glasgow turned northward and reached



the extreme right. About 4 p.m. we discovered three enemy ships by their smoke, and promptly reported the matter to the admiral. Boisterous weather still prevailed, but the sun was shining brilliantly.

Admiral Cradock took the lead in his flagship, directing the Monmouth, Glasgow, and Otranto to fall in behind him in the order named and advance upon the enemy. While getting into line the Monmouth passed quite close on our port side where I was standing, and we could see her men at their stations. Stalwart Royal Marines manned her after gun. They were stripped to their flannels ready for the fight, and seemed glad to be going into it. As they swept past our ship the Marines light-heartedly called out "Good old Pompey!" This being a reference to the fact that nearly all Admiral Cradock's ships were manned by Portsmouth crews. We gave the men of the Monmouth a hearty answer to their greeting as their ship forged ahead of ours.

On towards the enemy we went, with the challenge to action flying at the masthead, but the German ships did not appear anxious to accept it. By this time their number had increased to four, and they were clearly manoeuvring to get the advantage of the light, a thing which their superior speed enabled them to do successfully much to the disadvantage of the British Admiral.

**W**HILE the sun shone upon the German ships it made them a good mark for our gunners, so they held off out of range until the sun, setting behind our

squadron, silhouetted its ships upon the skyline and made them conspicuous targets. Admiral Cradock could not prevent this move, for the enemy was his superior in all points of manoeuvring power. When the action opened I was on the upper deck watching the enemy's ships in the distance.

Immediately the light was in their favour the Germans opened the action by directing some ranging shots at the Otranto. [The Otranto was a merchant vessel, armed with only four 4.7-in. guns.] Realizing that the Otranto would fall an easy prey to the enemy if she stayed in the firing-line, Admiral Cradock ordered her to make her escape. Now the Scharnhorst and the Gneisenau concentrated their fire upon the Good Hope and the Monmouth, whilst the two smaller German ships turned all their guns upon the Glasgow with devastating effect.

#### MERCILESS ONSLAUGHT

**I**T was a most unequal contest, one in which our ships had no earthly chance of winning. Admiral von Spee's squadron contained the best-trained gunners in the German Navy. His guns were heavier and could easily outrange ours. Consequently he was able to keep his ships clear of our salvos, whilst his own shot pounded our vessels to pieces. We were also heavily handicapped by the fact that owing to the bad weather our ships, especially the Good Hope and the Monmouth, rolled so heavily that their mess-deck guns were nearly always under water and out of action. The larger cruisers of the enemy did not



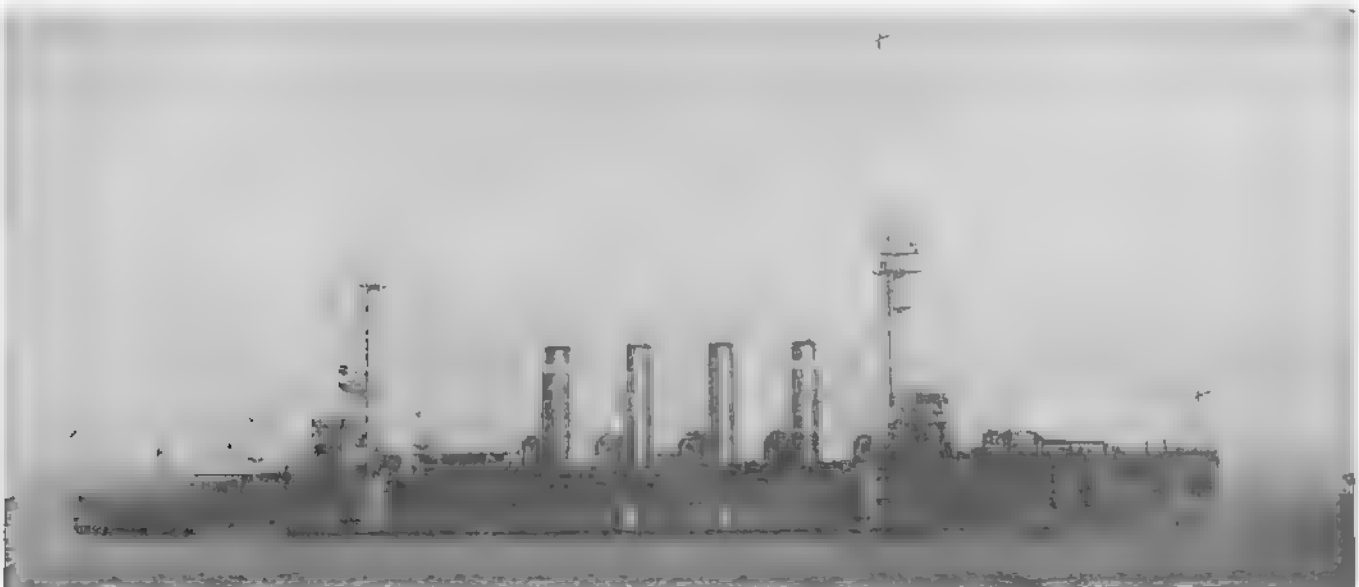
#### THE ONE GERMAN SEA VICTOR

Admiral von Spee won the only complete victory achieved by the German Navy during the war when, by superior armaments, he destroyed Admiral Cradock's squadron at Coronel on November 1, 1914, only to meet his death at the Falkland Islands on December 8, going down there with his ship.

suffer from this disability, and his gun-power, preponderating in any case, was thus rendered crushingly overwhelming as compared with our own. We were indeed facing fearful odds.

When trying to describe the scene now looked on, one realizes the feebleness of words.

We were fighting elements that were against us and a formidable enemy whom we could not reach. Night was falling. How we wished its dark shades would



#### FLAGSHIP IN A HOPELESS FIGHT

Sir Christopher Cradock's first flagship when he was in command of the 4th Cruiser Squadron on the North America station was H.M.S. Suffolk, a cruiser of 9,800 tons, but on August 13 he transferred his flag to H.M.S. Good Hope, seen above, an armoured cruiser of 14,000 tons, but over twelve years old. The Good Hope was blown up with the loss of the Admiral and all the crew during the hopeless but heroic fight at Coronel.

hasten down and thus give us a chance of coming to closer grips with the foe while our ships were still capable of effective action!

Around the Glasgow enemy projectiles fell like hail. Salvo after salvo plunged into the water near by, just missing the ship as she rolled. And all the time we could see the doomed Good Hope being struck by shell upon shell and only able to reply with one or two of her guns.

For the enemy, firing at her was merely so much target practice, and while we, with feelings that can well be imagined, watched her being thus mercilessly battered, there came the roar of an explosion, a burst of flame lit up the centre of the Good Hope, her funnels with the surrounding structure seemed to fly up into the air—then came darkness and empty sea where she had lain struggling heroically against fearful odds.



#### REVERTED TO FIGHT

Herbert de Hamel, author of this brilliant account of the first action in which the London Scottish were engaged, reverted from the rank of sergeant to private so that he might be sent to France with the first battalion. He was severely wounded in this battle. He wrote the famous play "War Mates" in 1915.

**O**CTOBER 31, 1914.—Our captain called us round him. The British front was hard pressed, he said, and the "Scottish" were to take up a position with the Regulars. They were relying on us to hold back the Germans from our little bit of front. He wisely made no effort to disguise the seriousness of the situation or the danger ahead of us. He congratulated us on the honour that had been bestowed on us and expressed his firm belief that the regiment would hold out till ordered to retire.

Our brave little flagship had been blotted out; battered into the ocean depths by sheer weight of enemy metal would, perhaps, be a more accurate way of describing the end.

**A**NGER at the loss of the Good Hope stimulated the Glasgow's crew to greater efforts. Our fire had the effect of making one of the German light cruisers that was attacking us fall out of line, but her place was at once taken by a third light cruiser which had now joined von Spee. Very soon, also, the damaged vessel had patched up sufficiently to resume, and the Glasgow fought all three of them at the one time.

Both the German armoured cruisers had now turned their guns against the Monmouth, presumably thinking that their smaller consorts were good enough to finish us. But they were not, even in the proportion of three to one. All the

same, they gave us a nasty battering. One shell from them passed above our sick bay, burst in the captain's cabin and wrecked it. Another struck us on the port side aft, just missed a propeller, and made a hole in the ship's side which was big enough to push a hand-truck through.

**S**o much damage did this shell cause that we had to prop up our deck with beams to keep it from falling in. Yet another shell missed one of our main steam pipes by only a hand's breadth. If it had not missed the pipe there would have been no Glasgow left to tell the tale of the Coronel fight. Six men who were at a gun close by where this shell burst had a miraculous escape, being only slightly injured by it. We also got two shells in our coal bunkers, but as the latter were full these shots did little harm.

\* 47 October 31—November 1, 1914

## BLOOD BATH of LONDON SCOTS

### Immortal Story of a Territorial Regiment

by Pte. Herbert de Hamel

**T**HE first London Territorial battalion to engage the enemy were the London Scottish, who came into action near Messines during the first battle of Ypres. They bore the brunt of the fiercest German attacks with the utmost gallantry. Surrounded on three sides they fought to the bitter end, losing 345 men but accounting for hundreds of Germans. The wonderful story of pluck and endurance which follows was written by a survivor who, though wounded, succeeded with his officer and eight other ranks in eluding capture. The London Scottish were warmly congratulated for their gallantry

Shortly after the battalion had marched out of St. Eloi it left the high-road and went across country till it reached a long low-lying hill, with its steep side covered with trees, bracken and brambles. Here we were halted and told to lie down. The air was full of a drowsy rumbling and muttering of guns. The sound was a distant one, but full of a strange uneasiness. Personally I found myself wishing that it were either a long way farther off, or a long way nearer.

I rolled over and went to sleep. I was awakened by my right ankle sliding down the slope, followed by the rest of my anatomy. The banging of the guns sounded far closer. I don't know if I had been dreaming of Germans, but I was by no means sorry to hear a cheery voice cry, "Wake up, old son, we're falling in."

We marched down a grassy road between trees stripped of their bark

and with their trunks strangely fluted and grooved by bullets. Then on past a prosperous-looking farm tenanted by incongruously ragged folk who reaped a harvest of discarded articles at our next halt.

From this a German aeroplane drove us to the cover of a wood. No sooner had I settled down for another sleep than we were off again, followed by the aeroplane, till we reached the village of Wytschaete. The battalion passed through, I believe, in safety, all save the last company. On our right were houses. On our left was a steep bank above which rose the church tower.

Big shells began to fall round us. The first two pitched beyond us, the next three crashed among the houses, throwing up clouds of dust, smoke and debris, the next one hit the church tower. . . .

The sight of the peasants rushing away down the main street in a panic





L.N.A.

brought home the tragic side of the bombardment.

A second shell struck the church tower, or part of the roof, and the fragments flew over us. Matters were becoming unpleasantly warm, when a staff officer was struck by an idea—and he waved to us to advance. As we marched up the street a house was shattered with a deafening noise close to the section in front of us. At this point occurred, I believe, the first casualties the regiment sustained. Some were carried into the cellars of the houses and others handed over to a section of native stretcher-bearers that had waited by us.

**T**HEN on went the company across fields, where picks and shovels lying on the grass spoke of a hasty scattering under shrapnel in the open, till we reached the rest of the battalion, standing close in by a hedge-bordered wood, waiting motionless every time a Taube sailed over us.

Behind the shelter of a hill we adopted column formation. The companies extended one by one and marched over the brow. Bullets began to fly pretty thickly over us, and they and the shrapnel grew more and more frequent as company after company breasted the ridge.

#### WHEN WOULD THEY BE CLEAN AGAIN?

This placid scene in which killed London Scottish men are shown washing themselves and their personal belongings in a wayside trough in an occupied town conveys nothing of the hardships through which they had gone nor which they were destined to face but a few days later as told by Mr. de Hamel in this chapter. While they thus enjoyed a brief respite, the ominous sounds and sights of war spread along the line, forbidding and relentless.

**A**s our company, the last one, came over the top, we could see our battalion ahead of us. The first two companies had closed and were lying down behind the next ridge. The others advanced in extended lines below us. The distance and the dressing were more perfect than at any field-day inspection at home. The lines marched steadily onwards through the roots. . . .

At last we reached dead ground, closed, and lay down. Once again the companies rose, extended, and passed over the brow of this second hill into what must have been a very blizzard of bullets.

In front of us sat Colonel Malcolm [Col. G. A. Malcolm, D.S.O., Commanding 1st Batt. London Scottish] chatting calmly to a staff officer. Every now and then he glanced half-anxiously along our line to see how we were taking it.

Near him sat two burly Life Guardsmen keeping watch and ward over a condemned man. He it was—a surly, black-bearded peasant—who had worked the sails of a windmill, and so brought down the big shells on

Wytshaete. This little attention had, I am told, been intended for the Lincolns, who passed through the village ahead of us.

I cannot vouch for this. All I can vouch for is that the shells were duly delivered.

#### HE WAS SURPRISED AND HURT

**J**UST as our turn came to follow on over the hill a staff officer ran up on our left and pointed back in the direction whence he had come. Wherefore the senior subaltern took his half company off to this new quarter. At first we were under cover. Then shell holes appeared in the ground and bullets began to pass us. One man sat down and commenced to bandage his legs—his expression one of surprised indignation.

Eventually we came to an open road and lay down in the ditch on the near side. It was a very shallow ditch, and we started to dig ourselves in.

A sudden increase in the output of shrapnel puzzled me, till I realized that



**BRIEF INTERLUDE BEFORE THE FATEFUL HOURS OF WYTSCHAETE**

Sprawled at ease and enjoying an alfresco meal on a French railway station, these London Scottish Territorials seem contented enough with the interlude as they await their next move. When they engaged the Germans around Messines during the first battle of Ypres the London Scottish played a role in the battle, and while this, their first experience of battle, brought them grievous losses, the day of the battle remains imperishable, some of the most remarkable of which are told in this chapter.





#### SITE OF VALIANT ADVENTURE

The remnants of the concrete strongpoint, seen in the foreground of this picture, serve to remind the casual passer-by today that across this undulating landscape the storm of war once raged. In the background stands Wytschaete, a village ever to be remembered by the London Scottish, for it was here that men of this Territorial regiment came under frightful fire as they made their way forward in the gallant action of October 1914, that is so vividly described in this stirring chapter.

*Photo, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.*

the senior subaltern had strolled along to our end of the ditch. He lay down and told us he wanted ten men to come with him to occupy a small trench in front of us. It had been held by natives [Indian troops] till their officers had been killed.

When the noise had quieted down he took the end ten men with him. We jumped up and started to double forward. "I think we'd better walk. It looks better," he remarked. So we walked towards a haystack that gave us some cover from sight. Once past this, things became more lively and our C.O. [the officer commanding this section in the field] took us on at the double.

#### HE SHOWED NO FEAR

FOR several hours there was an almost incessant din and concussion of shells. All through that inferno I was held by the pluck of the man next to me. In the very worst moments he was as bright and as cheery as was his usual habit of life. He must have felt afraid, as, of course, we all did, but he showed no sign of it.

After one particularly lively outburst of assorted shells, he remarked, "I suppose that after a couple more days we shall go back into a reserve trench."

"Probably this is a reserve trench," I said, "and tomorrow we shall get into the real thing."

"You always were a cheery blighter," replied Bugler Dunlop, and we both

laughed. Two days later I was told of his death out in the open.

About five o'clock the shelling ceased. The unnatural calm was broken only by the sound of occasional British shells and their distant explosion.

An officer in a native regiment came up to me and asked where he could find the officer in command. I directed him to our senior subaltern. In the dim light he must have mistaken the star for a crown, as he saluted our C.O. most respectfully and urged him to retire to a position in rear of our trench—which latter he described as the worst shell-trap in all the line.

Our C.O. replied that he had orders to hold the trench till the last possible moment, and that he intended so doing.

The captain shrugged his shoulders. "Very well, sir, of course if you insist on staying on here I can do nothing except hold my ground to support you." He saluted and turned away.

We had deepened the trench and had scooped out hollow caves, but there was no cover in the event of enfilade fire. I was soon hard at work with the

others in hewing a traverse at right angles to the end of our trench. It was very slow work, and after a long spell, with only room for one man to work at a time, we had progressed about four or five feet to a depth of five feet, and from that point the traverse ran up to ground level in a gentle slope.

THEN I ceased digging to take my hour spell at looking out. Two of us stood, side by side, peering into the patchwork of moonlight and shadow, straining our eyes for the least movement. Bullets "phitted" over us, past us, and between us. I felt heartily thankful when my spell came to an end. Our C.O., who could have rested comfortably under cover, shared the whole watch of each successive pair of look-outs.

I debated whether to enlarge my little cave or to enjoy my oft-postponed sleep. I decided on the latter course. I was no sooner curled up than the order came to stand to. A terrific rattle and crackle of rifle and maxim fire broke out. Away in front of us a line of dark figures advanced ghostlike in the moonlight. The C.O. told us to prepare to fire, but to wait for his command. . . .

"Who are you?" shouted the C.O. There was no answer, and he repeated the question. As this met with no reply he sang out to us to open fire. We blazed away into them and I wondered why they lay down in twos and threes to fire back at us. Then it struck me suddenly that they were tumbling over.

They made no attempt to rush us, but still advanced at a steady walk, falling as they came. Flashes spat out along their line, but there was no sound of shout or cry, only the crackling of rifle shots.

THE bullets cut through the hedge in front of us and slapped into the bank behind us as the line came on—and all the while our new rifles jammed and stuck. It might be after one shot or after five shots that we dropped to the bottom of the trench and tugged and banged at the bolt to get it free. Then, as often as not, it would foul the next cartridge from the magazine and refuse to click home. And all the while the dim line was advancing. I am told that all the rifles in the battalion were condemned and exchanged for new ones very shortly afterwards.

After a while there were no more Germans walking towards us, though the heavy firing continued somewhere in the near neighbourhood. Our casualties were a sergeant and a lance-corporal—each, I believe, hit in the eyes. They were taken to the rear in the lull which followed.

At the time I imagined this silence to mean that the German attack had been repulsed, but, according to "The Fighting Territorials," the British line had retired under orders to take up a new position, and the message did not reach the Carabineers or the "Scottish," who were consequently surrounded and cut off and had to fight their way through. I can speak only of what occurred to our own little party.

#### 'GET READY TO CHARGE!'

TO our left a light showed in the window of a house in the village. Other lights appeared in other windows, grew into a blaze and turned red. Flames poured out and burst through the roof. This happened in several houses, till the village was in flames. There was still firing going on, and we waited to see if anything else would happen.

It did. There came a sound of great cheering. "We're charging!" shouted the C.O. "Get ready to join in!"

Some way behind the trench a building blazed brightly. Silhouetted against this, a crowd of dark figures ran past with a curious shambling gait, each man

made in the same mould, bent forward under the weight of a heavy pack and crowned with a spiked helmet. It was not our men charging. These men were advancing in the wrong direction.

"They are after the Carabineers," said the C.O. "Double out and open fire on them. We'll try to draw them off, to give our poor beggars a chance of making a stand."

I stopped behind long enough to grab an extra couple of bandoliers, and doubled out after the others. Moonlight is a deceptive form of illumination, and I lay down in careful alinement with a row of turnip-tops and opened fire. After a while it occurred to me that I might be masking the fire of the man next to me. I jumped up and ran back (instead of crawling), and as I was lying down again the old proverb about more haste and less speed hit me a bang in the ribs and thigh with a red-hot poker, and I sat over backwards instead.

Then somebody discovered that the Germans were coming up in a solid mass behind us—so the others doubled back to hold the trench. The people we had fired on had turned on us and were also advancing—and a third lot were bearing down to enfilade us.

I got on my feet and proceeded to hunt diligently for a clip of cartridges which I had dropped. I was festooned with bandoliers and my pouches were full of ammunition, but that clip was the one thing which mattered. Had I hunted about for my sporran, which contained all my worldly wealth, there would have been some sense in the proceeding; but I had not then realized that the bullet which tore away my water-bottle had also robbed me of my sporran, leaving in place of the former an enormous charred hole in my greatcoat.

WHEN I returned to the trench, I sat on the floor. Fortunately there was not room to lie down, or I should, perforce, have remained in that position. The others were firing over both sides of the trench. The Germans blazed away at us from three sides. There was just one solid sound of bullets, a steady wail of changing notes. The junior subaltern, looking back from the ridge, saw a ring of fire round the trench and gave us up for lost.

The other sergeant's rifle jammed permanently. He took mine, but it had jammed also. Then, good fellow that he was, he cut off my greatcoat and my serge to get at my side. Thereby I lost many treasured possessions—in exchange for a small avalanche of sand.

Before he could get at my first-aid bandage the garrison began to evacuate

the position. Matters had been hopeless a second before. Then—so I am told—the smoke from a burning stack blew over the trench and hid it from sight after the most approved mythological fashion. I groped for my coat; I groped for my serge, but could not find them. They were very precious to me, but time was more precious still.

Wherefore I left them sadly and, holding on my kilt, climbed the easy slope of the thrice-blessed traverse and joined the C.O., who had stopped to make quite sure that all his men were out.

#### MY C.O. SAVED ME

WE then made for a high hedge in front of us. The party scattered a little. The sergeant and some of the men found a sunken road and reached our lines in safety.

When we reached the fence the fire opened again. I found a gate and shouted to the others. We went through it and ran into another party of advancing Germans. Turning sharply back along the other side of the fence, we passed through a farmyard unseen by the men who were inside the house, setting fire to it.

Then we reached a nine-foot fence with barbed wire strung through it. The others went over it like a troop of professional monkeys. The C.O. hailed me softly from the far side and refused to go on without me. I cursed him inwardly, because the muscles in my right side were not intact, and I had not even considered the question of gymnastic effort. I managed to climb up the wires with two feet and one hand, reached the top and took a header down into the dark. The C.O. fielded me, and we sat down together in a heap.

In the next field we ran across a company of German soldiers advancing in line upon our left. On our right hand was a hedge, so we were forced to keep straight on. . . . The moonlight was brilliant. We could see their uniforms and their faces and their Pickelhaubes, and could hear them talking together. Our men's bayonets were gleaming on the ends of their rifles and we must have been as plainly visible to them as they to us.

They made no attempt to rush us, and let us reach a road about 200 yards away; then they opened fire on us. I can only conclude that they deliberately waited till they were out of reach of our bayonets before molesting us. Our C.O. was so indignant about it that he was with difficulty restrained from hurling himself and his nine able-bodied followers at them with the bayonet. He left the place with the utmost reluctance, but although a sudden charge



#### **FLOWER OF EASTERN FIGHTERS ON THE WESTERN FRONT**

From every quarter of the Empire men came in 1914 to fill the ranks and fight the Allies' cause. In the first battle of Ypres dismounted Indian cavalry, shown above going into action at Hollebeke, fought with great gallantry, and Indian infantry displayed an indomitable spirit at the battle of Messines. Some troops belonging to the 129th Baluchi Regiment are shown below manning a somewhat crude breastwork outside Wytschaete, where, as told in this chapter, they were in action with the London Scottish. The courage and stamina these warriors of the Indian Army displayed under adverse climatic conditions which must have tried them sorely, aroused the admiration of all

*Imperial War Museum*







#### WHERE THE FIRST TERRITORIALS FELL

This beautiful memorial stands on a ridge near Wytschaete. The inscription on the plinth reads "Near this spot, on Halloween 1914, the London Scottish came into action, being the first Territorial battalion to engage the enemy." At the head of the cross is the regimental badge and below the battle honours of the London Scottish. A member of the regiment is here explaining to old war comrades how the battle went.

*Photo, W. A. Davis, copyr'gt A.P. Ltd.*

might have thrown that company into confusion, the place was crawling with additional Germans.

We walked down a road between small trees and struck out again across country. In front of us lay a village . . .

An enormous shell came rattling and snoring over us just as we approached the village. It burst in a blaze of light, and the houses became instantly a mass of flames. Three more shells followed, and two minutes later the whole place was a furnace.

**W**E turned back. . . . After a while we found ourselves on a road with high banks and walked along it. I had dropped back a little behind the others, and so first heard a wild rattle of hoofs on the road.

I shouted a warning that there was an Uhlan coming. They promptly ambushed. A cloaked figure galloped round the corner and pulled his horse back on its haunches as he suddenly found himself looking down nine rifle barrels, and at two bayonets which had jammed and refused to come unfixed.

I think we were all both relieved and disappointed when he turned out to be a corporal in the Household Brigade, riding for reinforcements. He told us that the Germans had simply poured over his regiment and broken through, and that the day was lost. He pointed out the direction of Ypres . . . then he set spurs to his charger and galloped on again.

Following his instructions, we struck out across a dreary, open plain, inter-

sected by water dykes, for all the world like the Norfolk marshes. . . . As we approached the high road on the far side of the marshes we saw a signal lamp winking from the base of a windmill, but as we knew not if the place was held in force by the enemy, or if the flashes were the work of a spy, or if they owed their being to one of our own signallers, we decided to make inquiries before we entered the village beyond.

**A**CCORDINGLY we halted on the road a little way out. We had not long to wait before a motor-car approached us. We stopped it and found it was driven by an English soldier, who told us that there was a staff officer and a dressing-station close by . . .

The C.O. turned me over to the dressing station and then hurried to report to the staff officer. From there he and his nine men joined in, I believe, with the force that stormed Messines a few hours later.



### **CUTTING THE KAISER'S CLAWS IN THE EAST**

One of the first efforts of the Japanese in the war was directed towards securing all Germany's outposts of Empire in the East so that her commerce raiders, such as the Emden, should have no point at which they could re-victual and re-coal. The advanced German positions at Tsingtao were attacked by a Japanese force late in September. British troops to support the attack were landed at Laoshan Bay, where the transports seen below are lying. Railway lines to be used in the advance are being unloaded from lighters. The force of 5,000 Germans in the fortress was soon completely isolated and had no means of communication with the outside world but such primitive ones as the heliograph station seen right. Above, the 2nd Battalion South Wales Borderers are seen landing at Laoshan Bay on September 23, to take part in the advance. The fortress surrendered on November 7.



# NEW LIGHT on the EMDEN

## Signalman's Stirring Story of a Famous Sea Fight

by Lewis R. Freeman

**FOR** the first three months of the War, the Emden, rivalling the exploits of the old French corsairs, had wrought great damage to English merchant shipping, and a sigh of relief arose when on November 9, 1914, H.M.S. Sydney at last put an end to the predatory career of the German light cruiser. The fight is here described to an interviewer by a signalman on the Sydney who from his vantage point had an unrivalled opportunity of witnessing every phase of the action

**I**T may be that it is because since the outbreak of the war the British sailor has constantly been riding the crest of the wave of great events, that he is so prone to regard even the most dramatic and historic actions in which he has chanced to figure as little or nothing out of the ordinary run of his existence, as only a slightly different screening of the regular grist of the mill of his daily service.

It was this attitude which was largely responsible for the fact that, although there were upwards of the three or four score officers and men who had taken part in the sinking of the Emden still in her, I spent several days in the Sydney before I found anyone who appeared to consider that stirring action as anything other than the mustiest of ancient history. In fact, when I did get the story, it was more by luck than deliberate design that an actor in the historic drama of which I had set myself the task of learning something at first hand came to tell me of the part he had played. That he had what were perhaps more comprehensive opportunities for observation than most others was my good fortune.

It was a young signalman who told me his had been the honour of being the first man in the Sydney to sight the "strange ship" which subsequently turned out to be the long-sought-for Emden.

"It was just the luck of my chancing to be on watch with a good pair of glasses," he said modestly, "but that was by no means the limit of my luck in connexion with the Emden show. When we went to 'Action Stations,' I was ordered to do nothing but keep an eye on the collier that had been standing-by the Emden at first, but which got away under full steam just as soon as it was plain we were going to give her beans. I carried out orders all

right, as far as keeping an eye on the collier was concerned, but my other eye and my mind were on the Emden ring of the circus. I don't really suppose there was another man on the Sydney who had as little to do, and therefore as much time to see what was going on, as I did. But that wasn't the end of my luck, for I was one of the party that went ashore next morning to round up the Huns who had landed on Direction Island, and then, after that, I was in the first boat that went to begin salvage operations on the Emden.

"We'd been rather playing at war up to the time we fought the Emden," he went on, "having spent most of the opening months purifying the Marshalls, Carolines, New Britain and New Guinea, by cleaning the Hun out of them. There had been a few skirmishes ashore, but nothing at all at sea, nor did the prospects of anything of the kind seem any better in early November than they had been right along up to then.

"We knew, of course, that the Emden was still in business, but we also knew that any one ship had about as much chance of finding her in the Indian Ocean as you have of finding the finger-ring you lose in the coal bunkers.

"The first and only word we had that a raider was in our vicinity was in the form of a broken message from the Cocos

station, which never got further than 'Strange cruiser is at entrance of harbour——' At that point the 'strange cruiser' managed to work an effective 'jam,' and it was not long before the Cocos call ceased entirely. Although we did not learn it till the next day, this was caused by the destruction of the station by a landing party from the Emden under Lieut. Mucke.

"The convoying warships were the Sydney, her sister the Melbourne, and a Japanese cruiser, larger and with bigger guns, but slower than we. The Jap, without waiting for orders from the captain of the Melbourne, who was the senior officer of the convoy, dashed off at once, and was only recalled with difficulty.

"As the job was one for a fast light cruiser, the choice was between the Sydney and Melbourne, and it was because the skipper of the Melbourne did not feel that he had authority to leave the convoy that the Sydney had the call. We worked up to top speed quickly and were soon tearing through the water, headed for Cocos Island, at over twenty-six knots.

"It was about seven in the morning when the broken message was picked up, and at eight I was sent aloft to relieve the look-out. It was nine-fifteen when the ragged fringe of the coconut-palms of Direction Island—the main one of the Cocos-Keeling group—began



**MODERN FREEBOOTER**

Captain Karl von Müller, who commanded the Emden during her remarkable career as a commerce raider, preserved the highest traditions of the sea, for he did all in his power to save the crews of the ships he captured and sank.





#### **FLAMES LICK ROUND THE ANCIENT BELFRY OF YPRES**

The beauty of the famous 13th-century Cloth Hall of Ypres had been jealously preserved by the people of the town, and when war broke out restoration had been in progress for six years, and the belfry was clad in wooden scaffolding. Then came the cruel bombardment beginning in November 1914. Shell after shell burst on the historic building. It was soon enveloped in flames, fed by the timber that was to have helped in its preservation. This remarkable photograph, like that in page 247, shows the beginning of the fire that left the Cloth Hall a blackened shell.

*Photo, Antony of Ypres*



**LONDON SCOTS QUITTED THEMSELVES LIKE FIGHTING MEN —**

The first proof of the fine fighting spirit that animated the British Territorial Infantry was given by the London Scottish at Wytschaete in the first battle of Ypres on October 31, 1914, when, as the official history of the war says, "the line that stood between the British Empire and ruin was composed of tired, haggard and unshaven men, unwashed, plastered with mud, many in little more than rags." It was to save this line that the London Scottish were thrown into the battle, and fought right gallantly, as is vividly told in Chapter 47.



**— BUT ONLY A REMNANT OF A GALLANT BATTALION REMAINED**

During that memorable day the battalion suffered 343 casualties, but five of the men in the group above, according to regimental information, survived into civilian life. They are, from left to right : third, Lance-Corporal Hastwell, now a restaurateur; fourth, Pte. Hutchins, now Senior Chaplain at Bordon Camp; seventh, H. T. Egerton, now departmental manager in a bank; eighth, Kenneth Greig, who became a D.A.D.O.S. during the war and is now an insurance broker; and twelfth, A. S. Miller. This photograph was taken by a French officer just after the battle.

*Imperial War Museum*





#### **TOWARDS NEW STRENGTH TO FIGHT AGAIN**

After enduring wounds and sickness sustained in the line, the fighting men of the British Army found life tranquil and gay during their convalescent period, even though the havoc of war lay all around them and the thunder of the guns was often close at hand. Above are shown details from different regiments passing through a French town. They have had a respite from the fighting line and are now on their way to rejoin their units and once again to take their part in the turmoil of the conflict.

to poke up over the horizon, and perhaps ten minutes later that my glasses made out the dim but quite unmistakable outline of three funnel tops.

"Although we hadn't studied silhouettes at that stage of the game to anything like as much as we've had a chance to since, that trio of smoke-stacks marked her for a Hun, and probably the Emden or Königsberg. Just which it was we never knew till after we'd put her out of action and picked up the crew of the collier that accompanied her.

#### THE ENEMY SURPRISED US

"THE first sign of life I saw on the Emden was when she started blowing the siren. This, although we did not know it at the time, was an attempt to call back the party she had sent ashore to destroy the wireless station. Luckily for that lot, there was no time for them to come off. The Emden did not, as I have read in several accounts of the action, attempt to close immediately, but rather headed off in what appeared to be an endeavour to clear the land and make a run for it to the south'ard.

It was only when her skipper saw that the converging course we were steering was going to cut him off in that direction, that he took the bull by the horns and tried to shorten the range to one at which his four-point-ones would have the most effect.

"There is no use denying that we were taken very much by surprise when the enemy fired his ranging shot at 10,500 yards, for we had hardly expected him to open at over seven or eight thousand. Still more surprising was the accuracy of that shot, for it fell short only by about a hundred yards, and went wobbling overhead in a wild ricochet.

"HIS next was a broadside salvo which straddled us, and his third—about ten minutes after his 'opener'—was a hit. And a right smart hit it was, too, though its results were by no means so bad as they might have been. I had the finest kind of a chance to see everything that that first shell did to us. It began by cutting off a pair of signal balyards on the engaged side, then tore a leg off the range-taker, then sheared off the stand supporting the range-finder itself, went through the hammocks lining the inside of the upper bridge, and finally down through the canvas screen of the signal bridge, and on into the sea. If it had exploded it could hardly have failed to kill the



#### AFTER A VISIT FROM THE EMDEN

The results of one of the Emden's most daring exploits are seen here. At 9.30 p.m. in the darkness of the night of September 21, 1914, she appeared off Madras and started the city by short but sharp bombardment of the Burnah Company's oil tanks which stood near the sea front, a legitimate act of war, for Captain von Müller always maintained the traditions of the sea. Two tanks containing half a million gallons of oil were set on fire and completely consumed. Other damage is illustrated in page 240. When the shore batteries opened fire on the raider she slipped away into the darkness.

captain, navigator, and gunnery lieutenant, and probably pretty well all the rest of us on both bridges.

"You may well believe, sir, that we were rather in a mess for some minutes following that smash, but I remember that the officers—and especially the captain and navigator—were as cool as ice through it all. The captain went right on walking round the compass, taking his sights and giving his orders, while the pilot was squatting on top of the conning-tower and following the Emden through his glasses, just as though she had been a race-horse. I even remember him finding time to laugh at me when I ducked as one or two of the first shells screamed over. 'No use trying to get under the screen, Seabrooke,' he said; 'that canvas won't stop 'em.'

#### ARMS AND LEGS WENT FLYING

"It was almost immediately after this that the after-control—located about amidships—met with even a worse disaster through being hit squarely with two or three shells from a closely bunched salvo. I had a clear view in that direction from where I stood, and I saw a lot of arms and legs mixed up in the flying wreckage, but the sight I shall never forget was a whole body turning slowly in the air, like a dummy in a kinema picture of an explosion. As the profile of the face showed sharp against the sky for an instant. I recog-

nized it as that of a chap who had been rather a pal of mine.

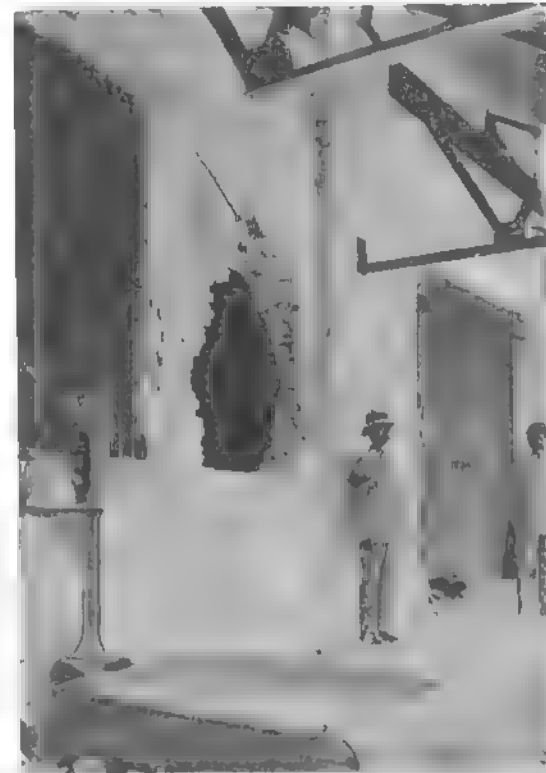
"A few minutes later, while I was edging along the deck with a stretcher-party, carrying our wounded range-taker, I saw, out of the corner of my eye, what appeared to be a very funny sight—one of the gun crew of a 'S-2,' which was not engaged at the time, dabbling his foot in a bucket of water. When I came back I saw that it was anything but funny.

#### GALLANT CASUALTY

"Two of the crews of starboard guns had been badly knocked about by the explosion of shells striking the deck at the end of their long high-angle flight. Among these was the chap I had seen apparently cooling his foot in a water-bucket. As a matter of fact, it was no foot at all he was dabbling, but only a maimed stump. The fool had been carried away by a shell fragment, and the brave chap, not wanting to be put on the shelf by going down to the surgeon, had—all on his own—scooped up a canvas bucket full of salt water and was soaking his stump in it in an endeavour to stop the flow of blood.

He was biting through his lip with the smart of the brine on the raw flesh as I came up, but as I turned and looked back from the ladder, leading up to the bridge, I saw him hobble painfully across the deck and climb back into his sight-setter's seat behind his gun.

"These I have mentioned were the several shots from the Emden which were responsible for our total casualties of four killed and twelve wounded. Of other hits, one took a big bite out of the mainmast, but not quite enough to bring it down. Another scooped a neat hollow out of the shield of the foremost starboard gun and bounced



#### SCENES IN THE EPIC STORY OF THE EMDEN

The exploits of the Emden won the admiration of the British Navy, for it she was a destructive foe she was also a chivalrous one. The two lower photographs were taken from the British steamer Katinga, which at this time had 417 passengers aboard, rescued from the ships that the Emden had sunk. Left, is the Emden with the Greek collier Pontoporos in attendance, and right is von Muller's famous raider about to sink the British merchantman, Diplomat, after her crew had been taken off. Above, right, is a hole in the wall of a Madras building caused by a stray shell during the shelling of the oil reservoirs, the result of which is shown in page 239.

off into the sea, leaving two or three of the crew who had been in close contact with the shield half paralysed for a few moments from the sharp shock.

"There is no doubt that for the first fifteen or twenty minutes of the fight the Emden had the best of it. This was probably due mainly to her luck in putting both our range-finders out of action, in what were practically her opening shots.

"It took her three ranging shots to find us, though, and once we started we did the same with her. Our first salvo fell beyond her, the next both short and wide, but two or three shells from the third found their mark. And we were no less lucky than the Emden with our first hits, for where she knocked out our gunnery control by disabling our range-finders, we did the same to her by shooting away the voice-pipes of her conning-tower, from which Captain von Müller, still obstinately resolute, directed the action.

"Just as soon as we started hitting the Emden she stopped hitting us. In fact, I don't think from then on to the end she dropped another shell aboard us.

"With the Emden's shell no longer bursting about our ears, I had a better chance to watch the effect of our fire upon her. I still have the page of memorandum on which I noted the time that a few things happened during the next hour.

#### HER FUNNELS GONE

"THE effect of our fire upon the Emden first began to show just after ten, and at 10.4 I made a note that her fore-funnel had disappeared. At 10.30 our lyddite caused a big explosion at the foot of her mainmast, making a fire which never was entirely got under control. At 10.34 her fore-mast, and with it the fore-control, collapsed under a hard hit and disappeared over the far side. At 10.41 a heavy salvo struck her amidships, sending the second funnel after the first, and starting a fierce fire in the engine-room. At 11.8 the third funnel went the way of the other two, and when I looked up from writing that down I saw that the forebridge had done the disappearing act.

"Almost immediately the Emden altered course and headed straight for the beach of North Keeling Island, which she had been rapidly nearing during the last hour. The Sydney fired her last salvo at 11.15, and then, the captain seeing that the enemy was securely aground, made his decision to turn away and



**ONLY SHOT THAT WENT HOME**

As the Sydney considerably outranged the Emden and had the advantage in speed, she suffered very little from the enemy fire, the only serious damage being that seen in the photograph where some of the crew are standing round the remains of one control station which was destroyed by a direct hit, all the men in it being wounded. The Sydney had only four men killed and twelve wounded.

started in hot pursuit of the collier.

"This collier, as we learned presently, was a former British ship, the Buresk, which had been captured by the Emden some time before and put in charge of a German prize crew. If her skipper had not felt sure that the Emden was going to do for us, he could have steamed out of sight while the engagement was on. As it was, he lingered too long, and we had little difficulty in pulling up to a range from which we could put a warning shell across the runaway's bows. That brought her up, but the Hun naval ensign was kept flying until a signal was made for it to be struck. That brought the rag down on the run, but her skipper prevented it falling into our hands by burning it.

"No sooner was our boarding officer over her side than a mob of Chinese stokers crowded about him shouting in 'pidgin' English that 'puff-puff boat gottee biggee holee. No more top-side can walkee.' Rushing below, our men found the sea-cocks open, with their spindles bent in a way to make closing impossible. As the ship was already getting a list on, there was nothing to do but take the prisoners off and let her go down a shattered and an empty hulk.

"To make sure that there was no trick about the game—that no concealed crew had been left behind to

stop the leads by some prearranged contrivances and steam away with her as soon as it was dark—the Sydney pumped four shells into her at short range, and she was burning fiercely from fires started by these when the water closed over her. Then, at a somewhat more leisurely gait, we steamed back to see how it fared with the Emden.

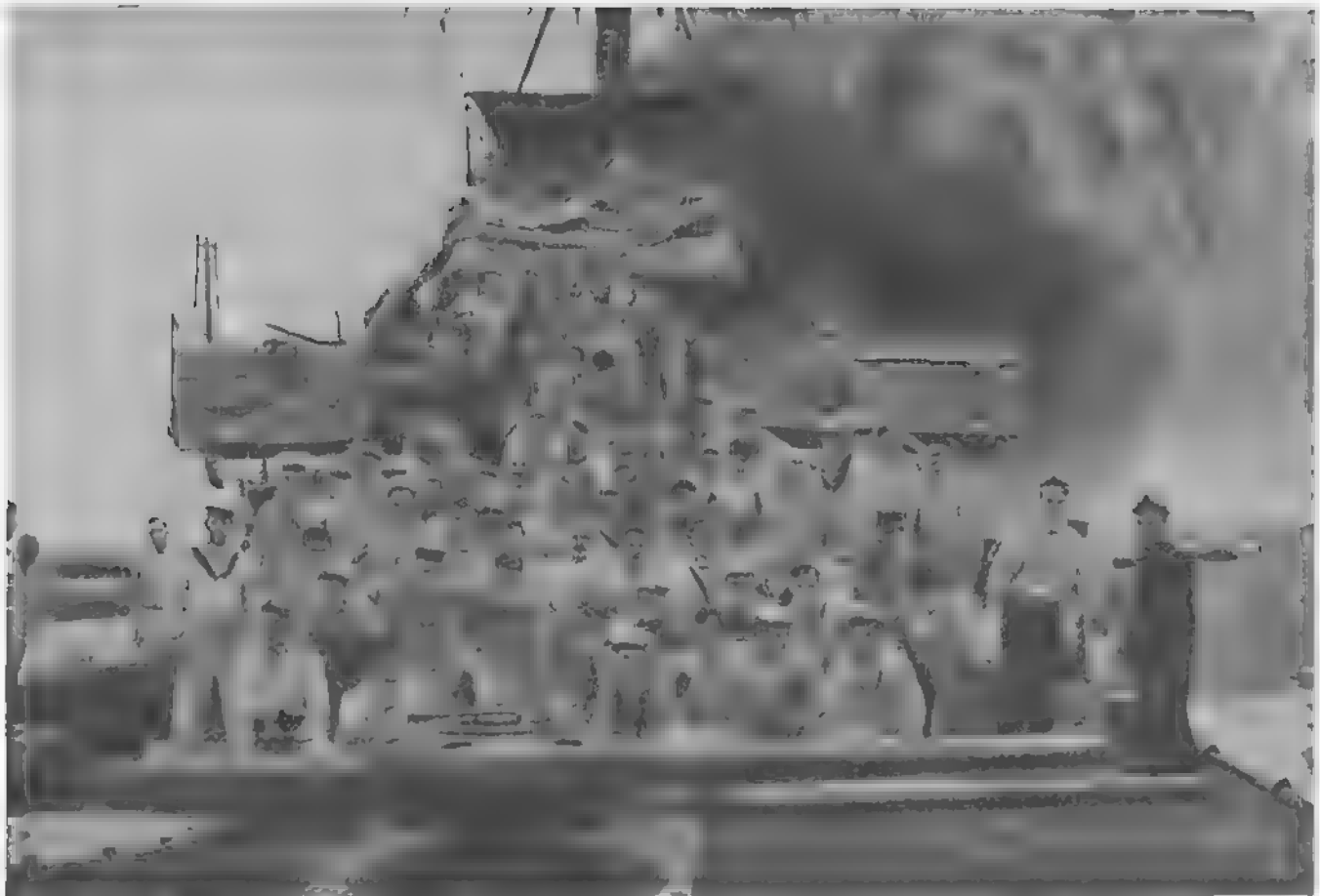
"It was now about the middle of the afternoon, and the first thing we noticed—standing out sharp in the rays of the slanting sun—was the naval ensign flying at the still upright mainmast of the Emden.

#### 'DO YOU SURRENDER?'

"THE instant he saw this, the captain made the signal, by flag, 'Do you surrender?' To this Emden made back, by Morse flag, 'Have no signal books,' which meant, of course (if it was true), that she couldn't read our first signal. Then, using Morse flag, which they had already shown they understood, we repeated the signal, 'Do you surrender?' There was no answer to this, and again we repeated it. As there was still no answer, and as there was no sign whatever of anything in the way of a white flag being shown anywhere, the captain had no alternative but to continue the action.

"I have always been glad that I heard the captain's orders to the gunnery-





#### WELL DONE, AUSTRALIA'S NAVY!

No prouder crew ever stood before a camera than the crew of H.M.S. Sydney, seen in this almost forgotten photograph above just after the sinking of the Emden. The men are standing before the forward gun. Above them is the bridge where the captain was when the foremost range-finder was shot away. The pile of hammocks was used as a protection against splinters. This triumph of the Australian Navy sent a thrill of pride through the Commonwealth and relieved the British Navy of a daring and elusive foe.

lieutenant at this time, for the point is one on which the Hun survivors were even then ready to start lying.

"We were at fairly close range, and I heard Lieut. R. ask the captain upon what part of the ship he should direct his fire. The captain studied the Emden through his glass for a few moments, and then, remarking that most of the men appeared to be bunched at opposite ends of the ship, on the fo'c'sle and quarter-deck, said he thought that there would be less chance of killing anyone if the fire was directed somewhere between those two points. Then I heard him give the definite order, 'Open fire, and aim for foot of mainmast,' and that was the word that was passed on to the guns.

"The port guns fired (if I remember right) three quick salvos, and we were just turning to give the starboard ones a chance when a man was seen clambering up the solitary stick of the Emden and the word was passed 'Don't fire without further orders.' At the same

time a white flag, which I later learned was a table-cloth, was displayed from the quarter-deck. A moment later the naval ensign fluttered down, and shortly I saw the smoke of new fire on the quarter-deck. I surmised rightly that they were following the example of the Buresk in burning their flag to prevent its capture, but what else was going up in that fire I did not learn until I swarmed up to that deck the next day.

#### WHITE FLAG BLUFF

"It was an unfortunate fact that our guns, which there had been no time to overhaul, were suffering a good deal from the strain of their hard firing during the battle. As a consequence, their shooting was by no means as accurate as at the beginning of the action, and several of the shells went wide of the point at which it was endeavoured to direct them.

"There is no doubt that they wrought havoc among the crowd on the fo'c'sle, and I don't think our prisoners were

exaggerating much when they said that those three last salvos killed sixty and wounded a good many more, and also that a number of others were drowned by jumping into the surf in the panic that followed. One could feel a lot worse about it, though, if the whole thing hadn't been due to the sheer pig-headedness of their skipper in trying to bluff us into letting him keep his flag up. He has the blood of every man that was killed by those last unnecessary shots on his hands.

"VON MÜLLER was brave, all right.

There's nothing against him on that score. But it was nothing but his pride and a selfish desire to keep his face with his superiors whenever he got back to Germany, that led him to force us to fire those entirely needless shots into his ship. He thought that he would cut a better figure at his court-martial if his colours were shot down, rather than lowered in surrender.

"One thing more while I'm speaking of this incident. Von Muller deliberately bluffed about his flag. He pretended not to understand our signals just because it served his purpose not to understand them. But when our guns began to talk he had no difficulty in translating their language."

# The STARK HORROR of SANCTUARY WOOD

by Corporal John Lucy

*IN this grim picture of the horrors of war Corporal Lucy tells of the fighting round Sanctuary Wood on November 11, 1914, a most critical day in the history of the First Ypres battle, when the most violent attacks of the German army were resisted. Corporal (now Captain) Lucy tells also how he first encountered men of the London Territorial battalions now thrown into the tortured battle line*

**W**E stood to in the wet shell holes and crumbling trenches under the thunder and blasting flashes of German high explosives. There is no need to describe this bombardment, except to say that it was the worst in my experience.

A few of our fellows broke under it, and one poor chap entirely lost his head and ran back out of his trench. He had not a chance in the open. The earth was vomiting all round us and he tumbled over in a few yards. Better to have kept to the trench. No trained soldier would leave that.

A corporal, a burly fellow, fell near me, with a shrapnel bullet in his head. He lay unconscious all the day, nodding his holed head as if suffering only from some slight irritation, and did not become still until evening. Earlier in the day one youngster said: "What about putting him out of his misery?" A more experienced man explained that

there was no pain. The small stirrings and little moans came from a man who was then already as good as dead.

Another soldier had his belly ripped open, and sat supporting his back against the trench, while he gazed with fascinated eyes at large coils of his own guts, which he held in both hands.

This was almost the ghastliest sight I saw. Its sequel was better. The man's entrails had not been penetrated. He got safe out of the trench, was washed, tucked in, and mended well in hospital.

Maimed men passed crouching and crawling behind me, leaving trails of blood on the ground, on their way to a ditch which led back to the woods behind. Some of them were moaning too loud, unlike our old men. One young militiaman in particular came by roaring, and seeking sympathy for a broken arm from everyone he met. A lance-corporal told him for God's sake to put a sock in it, and that if he

## WHEN SANCTUARY WOOD JUSTIFIED ITS NAME

It was amidst this scene of sylvan beauty that the ghastly scenes described in this chapter took place. At the moment all is peace, and the wood gives a brief sanctuary to a Yeomanry regiment, the Northumberland Hussars, who were soon to prove their prowess as fighters in another wood rent by the horrors of war, Polygon Wood. The Northumberland Hussars were the first British Yeomanry regiment to go into action in the war.



was really badly wounded he would have no breath left to howl. That stopped his hysterics.

I should say that the non-coms. of the old army had the worst time of all, trying in circumstances like these to keep inexperienced men in hand.

Some of these men could not even fire a rifle properly, and at times our hearts quailed for our safety and theirs.

The few officers we had no doubt felt all that we did, but they were free to move about, and this was a great advantage from the point of view of a junior N.C.O. pinned to his sector, to the bit of trench he was given to defend, and always under the close scrutiny of the men he was supposed to lead and encourage.

A RUNNER pushing past gave me a nasty jar: "God, are you alive?" he said crudely. "We heard you were killed, down at headquarters." "No hope!" I said, hardly daring a longer sentence lest death should finish it. The trenches were filled with the acrid smell of shell smoke. Heavy shrapnel burst right down on us, its pall of smoke roofing the trench and blotting out the sky. I was flung about by the concussion, and thrown flat against the trench bottom. My whole body sang and trembled. One ear was perforated by the concussion, and I could hardly hear. The runner came to me, and we held each other with our hands. "Are you all right?" I nodded, having no talk.

"The message I am taking is, 'Stand to,' because the enemy is massing just in front of us," he said. "Nasty spot, this." And he hurried along, two more close bursts adding to his speed.

#### 'NOW WE'RE FOR IT'

BEFORE the shelling ceased we were ordered to man the trench: "Stand to, stand to, every one," and our rifles lined our broken parapets. The man of my section on my immediate left kept his head down. I grasped his arm and shook him savagely: "For Christ's sake, get up, you bloody fool. The Germans are coming."

He fell over sideways and on to his face when I released him, and exposed a pack covered with blood. He was dead, and my eyes came off him to my shoulder, which was spattered with his brains and tiny slivers of iridescent bone.

The soldier on my right, wincing like most of us now standing head and shoulders exposed to the fury of the shells, said desperately: "Mother of God! This is terrible."

A tall old sweat farther along shouted grimly: "Ha-ha, me bhoys! Now we're for it."

Six German army corps were marshalled in the open, advancing like a parade on the weak British Army.

The magnificent Prussian Guards made a review of it. They executed their famous goose-step in the sight of their foe, and the field-grey waves came on. The Kaiser was close behind in some neighbouring town, ready to receive reports of the great breakthrough.

#### THE PRUSSIAN GUARD

THE left of the Prussian Guard attack caught us. Farther to our left the line broke, mended, broke, and mended again. A counter-attacking English regiment went through a temporarily victorious enemy like a knife through butter, and recaptured a lost village with great dash.

We stopped the Germans on our front, and they were the finest troops of Germany, led by the flower of her noblest houses.

That was all: a weak night attack was repelled. The next morning we found a German alive at our wire. He dropped his wire-cutters and made a friendly motion with his hand, intending surrender. Our desperate fellows covered him with their rifles. I called out: "No. Save him!" A bitter voice replied: "No bloody fear. No Sergeant Benson tricks here." And the brave German was swiftly killed.

[Sergeant Benson had been killed by the Germans when attempting to rescue a wounded enemy soldier.—ED.]

WE stayed in the line for two more days, easily checking weaker attempts to drive us back, and then once more we went out to reserve. We then ceased to fight as a battalion. We were too weak. We were told off to be ready to relieve the regiments in the line at a moment's notice. A Scottish Territorial regiment with a similar duty twice went up, and twice recaptured trenches and reinstated another battalion. They were unbelievably cheerful.

One young Highlander going back a second time called out: "Give us a shout if ye want us again."

The Terriers had arrived. The supposed Saturday-night soldiers. Another regiment of them from London did great work.

We Regulars got just a bit bored at reading their recorded deeds in every newspaper we managed to scrounge.

While in reserve I was detailed one morning to escort a sick party to Hooge. On the way back I got caught in a barrage and bolted into a dug-out. It was the headquarters of a Regular regiment in reserve. The commanding

officer growled: "Who's that?" I gave my name and regiment and asked permission to stay a minute until the shells stopped. "Get out of here," he ordered, and he sent me out into the shelling.

The next morning some of our men assisted in digging him and his adjutant out of the dug-out, which had been blown in on them. They were both dead.

Now, in a weak moment, I thought I would go sick myself. I had developed haemorrhoids, and they bled rather badly. A sergeant with a perforated ear like mine said he would join me and go to the field-ambulance to be dressed, hoping to be detained there. We had other minor cuts, and a good many bruises too, and the skin was inclined to go dirty. The knuckles of our forefingers [trigger fingers] were cut open from constantly firing our rifles. A calloused knuckle on a forefinger is the hallmark of the 1914 men.

ON the way we had to dodge a good many shells, and in an interval of sheltering behind a house we answered some call we could not resist, and returned, feeling ashamed, to our reserve trench. On our way we pulled a young frightened lance-corporal from shelter and made him rejoin with us. He later turned out to be the most distinguished soldier in the regiment, and he was four times decorated for valour.

On the 19th of November we were again in the line, because a battalion that had suffered worse than ours had to be given a rest; but that evening the London Territorial Regiment, fresh and strong, came to relieve us—a relief that was to take us away from that battlefield of Ypres, right back to Westoutre.

#### ONLY 4 OF EVERY 100 LEFT!

THIS time only forty men of my regiment were able to march away. The rest were killed or wounded.

Forty—forty left out of two hundred and fifty, and only about three weeks ago there were only forty-six left out of an entire battalion. I searched my mind for total figures, and roughly reckoned that in three months ninety-six men out of every hundred had been killed or wounded. I was too weary to appreciate my own luck. I was so completely dazed that I lingered in the front line, while a London Territorial congratulated my regiment on giving the Germans "Denbigh." He was a cultured man in the uniform of a private soldier. But "Denbigh"—I did not know the word. I do not yet know its meaning. [The Earl of Denbigh was Col.-Commandant of the H.A.C.—ED.]

The Londoner looked for praise. He liked talking to me, a Regular corporal of the line. He asked if I thought his regiment would, any day, be as good as those of the old army.

I said: "Yes. Every bit as good."

My eyes weakened, wandered, and rested on the half-hidden corpses of men and youths. Near and far they looked calm, and even handsome, in death. Their strong young bodies thickly garlanded the edge of a wood in rear, a wood called Sanctuary. A dead sentry at his post leaned back in a standing position against a blasted tree, keeping watch over them.

**P**ROUDLY and sorrowfully I looked at them, the Macs and the O's, and the hardy Ulster boys joined together in death on a foreign field. My dead chums.

A silence more pregnant than the loudest bombardment stole over the

country, the evening silence of the battlefield. A robin sat in a broken bush on the parapet and burst into song.

**T**HE Londoner said quietly: "You'd better hurry up, Corporal. The Irish are falling in on the left."

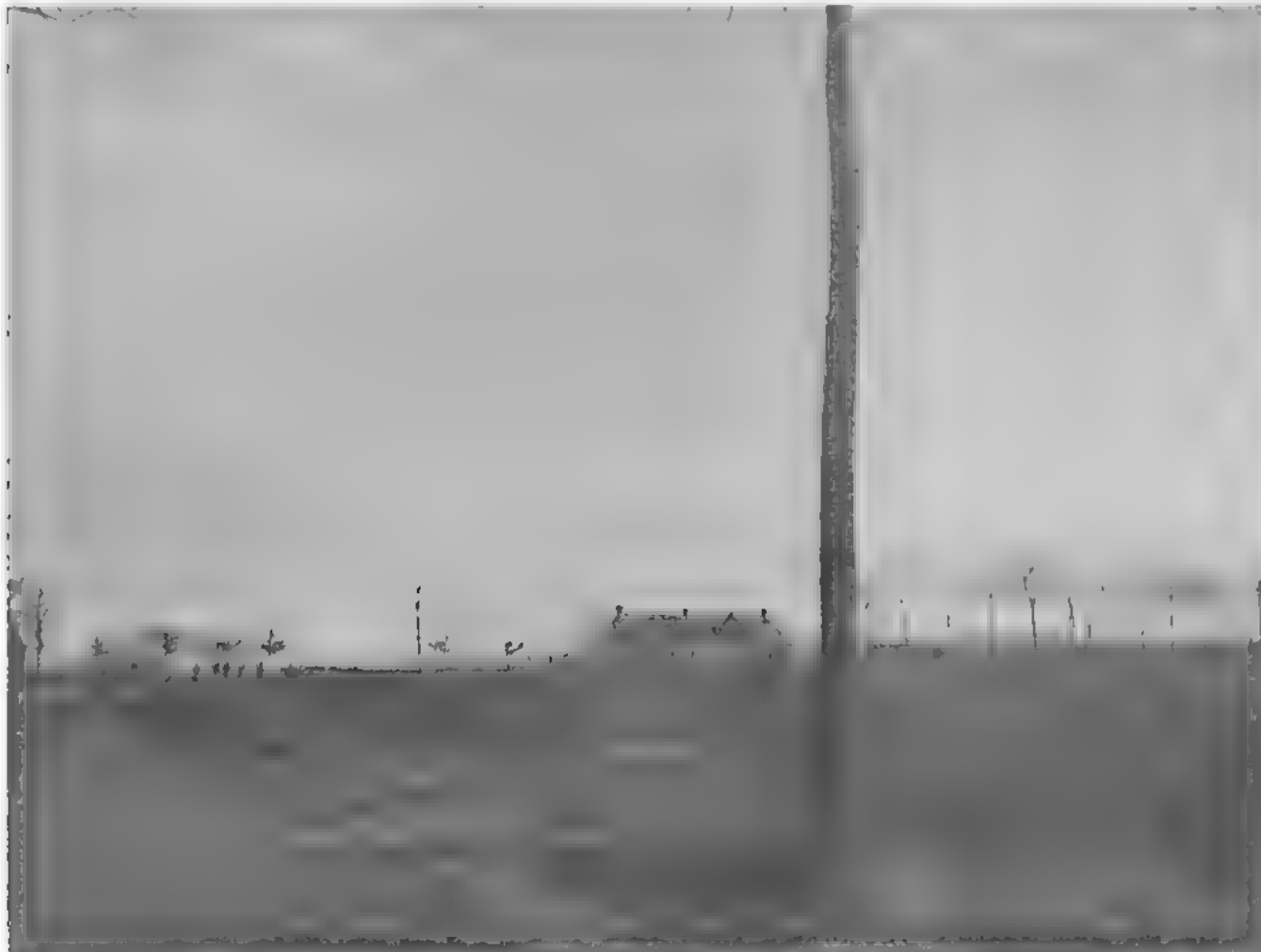
I slung my rifle over the left shoulder. "So long, chum. Good luck!" "So long," said the Londoner, and I left him with our dead. The roll was being called when I joined our small party, but there was no zest in this roll-call.

All the men stood heavily and answered listlessly. Information about dead and wounded was murmured. Our curiosity now was not for the out-numbering dead, but for our few selves, and in a dazed way we inspected each other's faces, because every survivor was a phenomenon in himself. We exchanged half-smiles of appreciation

and silent congratulation. Then we slouched off across the cold, barren, wintry fields, without talk, to join the main road at Hooze, and, arriving there, got into step once more on the hard-paved road. Hooze was wrecked. South of it the Menin Road from Ypres was stiff with French cavalry. They were drawn up in long lines on the west of the road, with their horses' heads facing inwards toward the centre of the road—massed in thousands and standing by, mounted, to check the Germans in case the British broke. They were not wanted.

The first battle for Ypres was over, and Ypres was saved.

As we drew nearer to the old moated town we thought it had not been worth defending, for it was already in ruins and it looked as if every house had been destroyed by shell or flame.

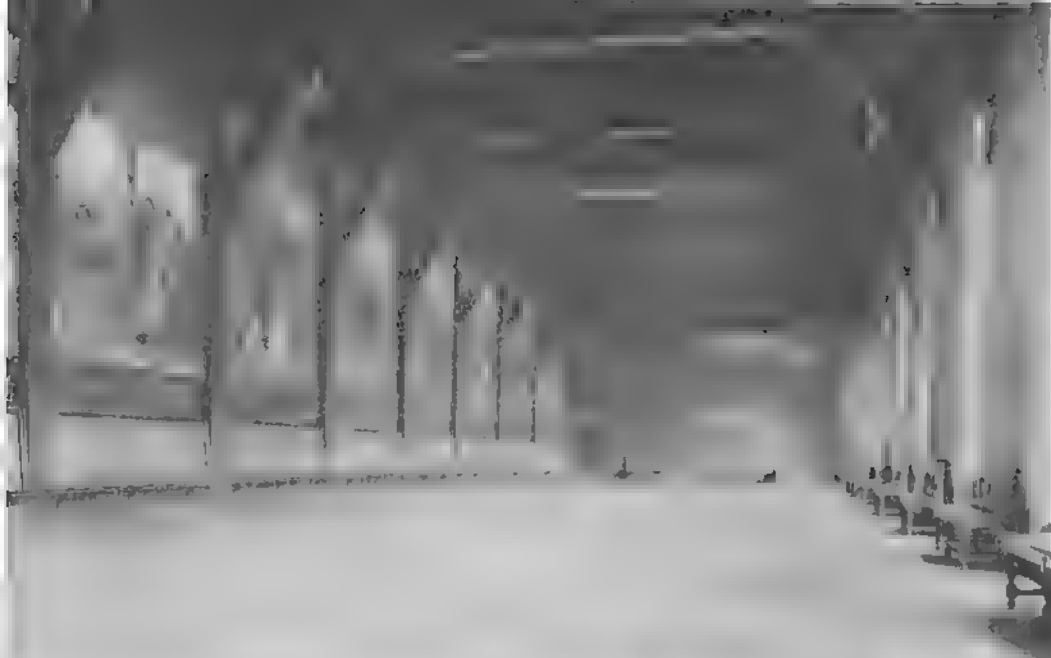


#### THE MENIN ROAD RECEIVES ITS BAPTISM OF FIRE

Here as yet hardly touched by the dire hand of war is the ground behind the Ypres-Menin Road, later to be the scene of the furious fighting and heroic deeds that have left it an outstanding memory among the many that cluster round the villages of the Salient. But the clouds of war are already showing, and the white puffs of smoke seen above the horizon are German shells bursting above the road.

*Imperial War Museum.*



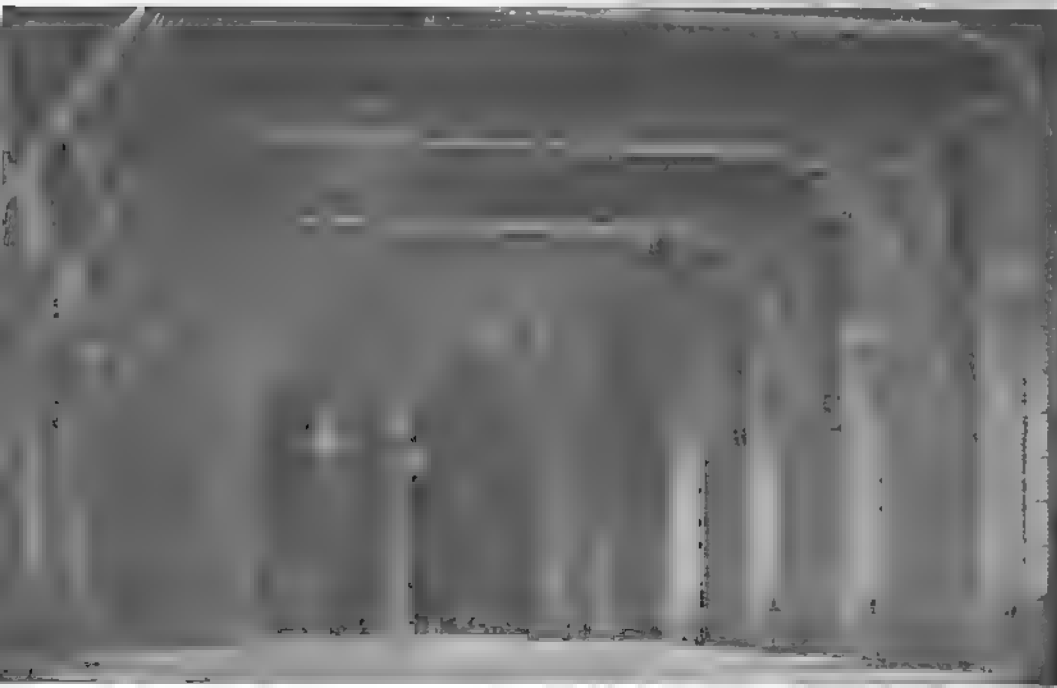


## **DRAMA OF THE YPRES CLOTH HALL 1914 and 1938**

ONLY the first stage in the destruction of the Cloth Hall was achieved by the Germans in 1914. Throughout the war the bombardment of it continued until, as shown in later pages in this work, the scarred and blackened walls stood only a few feet above the ground.

Above is a part of the interior of the Cloth Hall at Ypres as it was before the war. It is the Salle Echevinale which in the 19th century was restored in the modern Gothic style and decorated with the frescoes, seen on the left wall, of the entry of Philip the Bold of Burgundy into Ypres and other scenes in the town's history. All this was destroyed by many fierce bombardments, as bit by bit one of the architectural glories of Belgium was brought to complete ruin.

*Photo, C. Pilkington, in Imperial War Museum*



Above, is the interior of the Cloth Hall as it was during the German bombardment of the town in 1914. The roof is off and to the pillars among which the merchants of Ypres conducted their affairs in medieval times, British soldiers have tethered their horses. The photograph left shows the hall of the Salle Echevinale as it is today with the work of restoration complete with the exception of the end wall. We are indebted to the Clerk of the Works to the Town of Ypres, M. Albert Werrebrouck, for permission to take this photograph.

*Bottom photo, A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.*

## ITS GLORY RISES AGAIN BUT BLACKENED RUINS REMAIN

*Photos, Antony of Ypres and A. J. Insall,  
copyright A.P. Ltd.*

The photograph of the Cloth Hall at Ypres above was taken but a short time after that in page 235, and shows another stage in the almost irreparable disaster, for, as photographs reproduced in later pages of this work show, the bombardments of 1915 and 1917 almost razed it to the ground. The original structure consisted of two wings on either side of the belfry, while on the east side, seen on the right of the top photograph, is the Nieuwerk built early in the 16th century, the lower part consisting of an open hall supported by columns.

Right, is the Cloth Hall as it is today, partly restored. It is a replica of the original building, but only one wing and the glorious belfry have been rebuilt. Above the motor-coaches on the right of the photograph can be seen the blackened walls of the Nieuwerk which there has been no attempt to restore, and it remains a 'lasting memoria' to Ypres' most tragic hours. The belfry, the first part of the restoration to be completed, was inaugurated by King Leopold on July 29, 1934.



#### CHATFIELD

Captain Ernie Chatfield, now Lord Chatfield, and until recently First Sea Lord, was Lord Beatty's Flag Captain in H.M.S. Lion at the battle of Jutland, and stood beside him on the bridge of the Queen Elizabeth during the surrender of the German Fleet after the Armistice. Left is Lord Chatfield as he was in 1918, and right as he is today.



### THEN CAPTAIN & COMMANDERS NOW ADMIRALS

In the years that have elapsed since the World War death has taken a heavy toll of those who held high commands in the Navy, but the three officers in this page who still survive twenty years later won fame between 1914 and 1918 while comparatively juniors in the service.

#### EVANS

The name of Commander Evans, now Admiral Sir Edward Evans, will go down in naval history as "Evans of the Broke," on account of the remarkable feat which he performed when, in command of the destroyer Broke in 1917, he, with the destroyer Swift, met and defeated six German destroyers in the Straits of Dover. He was specially promoted captain for his services in action. Before the war he had been second in command of Captain Scott's Antarctic Expedition and was specially promoted commander. Below, left, in 1918; right, today.



#### NASMITH

Lieutenant-Commander Nasmith, now Admiral Sir Martin Nasmith, performed one of the most remarkable feats achieved by any submarine commander during the war while in command of submarine E.11, in 1915. He passed through the Dardanelles into the Sea of Marmora on May 19, and remained there until June 7, sinking eleven Turkish ships during that time. His heroic work was rewarded with the V.C. Top photograph as he was then; lower one as he is today.

# Last Days of the First Year

Nov. — Dec. 1914

**T**HE last month of the year 1914 saw the revenge of the naval disaster of Coronel in the victory of the Falkland Islands. England was startled by the bombardment by German warships of the Hartlepoons. Fighting in the neighbourhood of Ypres became for the time more desultory. ¶ We illustrate this period by Commander the Hon. Barry Bingham's eye-witness account of the defeat of the German Admiral von Spee at the Falkland Islands. ¶ A British officer who was in a responsible position at the Hartlepoons tells his story of the bombardment. Lt.-Col. Strange, a famous airman, gives a most vivid account of the battlefields from the air. ¶ We are also privileged to publish a letter by the late Sir Edward Hulse describing the amazing "unofficial armistice" of Christmas Day 1914.

\* 50 December 8, 1914

## REVENGE! I Saw Von SPEE Meet his DOOM

by Rear-Admiral the Hon. Barry Bingham, V.C.

**I**T was on November 8 that Vice-Admiral Sir Frederick C. Doveton Sturdee, K.C.B., C.V.O., C.M.G., left the Admiralty, where he had been hitherto serving, and came down to Devonport in order to hoist his flag in H.M.S. Invincible.

Admiral Sturdee, temporarily appointed Commander-in-Chief South Atlantic and South Pacific, had instructions to take the Invincible and Inflexible (Captain Richard F. Phillimore, C.B., M.V.O.) under his orders and proceed southwards at the maximum economical speed. At a certain rendezvous he was to be joined

by other cruisers already out in the South Atlantic waters. Finally, with this combined force he was to seek out and annihilate von Spee's squadron; and there was to be no return home until these orders had been carried out to the letter.

The first port of call was St. Vincent, the capital of the Cape Verde Islands, where we paused only to coal; thence to a secret rendezvous, Abrolhos Rocks, some thirty miles off the coast of Brazil, for a similar purpose.

At Abrolhos Rocks we were joined by the following cruisers, which placed themselves under the flag of Admiral



JUTLAND V.C.

Commander Barry Bingham, now Rear-Admiral Bingham, took part in the battles of Heligoland Bight, the Falkland Islands, and Jutland, and won the V.C. at the last-named battle for the gallant way in which he led the 13th Destroyer Flotilla, of which he was in command, into action.

### WHENCE VON SPEE WENT OUT TO MEET HIS END

During his operations off the coast of South America Admiral von Spee made Valparaiso his base, and it was for news of his having rounded Cape Horn that Sir Doveton Sturdee anxiously waited at the Falkland Islands. Below is von Spee's squadron in the harbour of Valparaiso after the battle of Coronel. The two outer ships with four funnels are the Scharnhorst, von Spee's flagship, and the Gneisenau, her sister ship.

Sturdee: Carnarvon (Captain L. Skipwith), flying flag of Rear-Admiral Stoddart; Kent (Captain J. D.







**THE KENT'S FLAG AT THE FALKLANDS**

At the battle of the Falkland Islands H.M.S. Kent flew a silken white ensign made and presented to her by the ladies of Kent. It is here being broken just before the action. The "battle and the breeze" did considerable damage to it, but it was repaired and deposited in Canterbury Cathedral on July 1, 1916.

*Imperial War Museum*

Allen); Cornwall (Captain W. M. Ellerton); Glasgow (Captain John Luce); Bristol (Captain B. H. Fanshawe); Otranto (Captain J. R. Seagrave).

The above ships, together with the two battle-cruisers, left the Abrolhos Rocks and steered for the Falkland Islands, the whole squadron proceeding in extended formation, with an interval of ten miles between each unit, and with the Invincible in the centre, to enable the remainder of the squadron quickly to concentrate on her. The object of this formation was to provide for the possibility of running across von Spee's squadron.

**A**CTING completely in the dark, Admiral Sturdee decided to make for the Falkland Islands—which, it may be explained, lie 240 miles from the coast of South America, and 300 miles N.E. of Cape Horn; and, using Port Stanley as his headquarters, to institute a series

of searching operations from this point.

The first cast was to be round Cape Horn; and then there was to be a draw of the route to Valparaiso. If that failed, the Admiral had no option except to retrace his steps and try his luck the other side. If this ground, too, proved barren, it would be necessary to search farther afield.

It was at 10.30 on the morning of December 7 when the squadron steamed in and took up anchoring billets in Port William, the outer harbour of the Falklands; while the two light cruisers—for the Bristol had now been joined by a sister ship, the Glasgow—proceeded into the inner harbour, Port Stanley, also the name of the capital, which lies at the head

of the harbour. The first thing to greet our eyes was the old Canopus, resting on the mud, anchored fore and aft, temporarily converted into a floating fortress; in fact, the ship had become the defender of the Falklands. This ancient battleship had been despatched at the last moment by the Admiralty to reinforce Cradock's ill-fated ships, which as a squadron the Admiral knew to be outclassed by the German China Squadron.

Realizing that the Good Hope and Monmouth were no match for the Scharnhorst and Gneisenau, Cradock had earnestly petitioned the Admiralty to allot him one or more modern armoured cruisers, such as the Defence or Warrior. These two ships, however, could not at that time be spared from the Mediterranean, presumably owing to the fact that the Goeben and Breslau were still at large in Turkish waters.

Thus a request for material assistance

brought nothing better than the obsolete Canopus, with a maximum speed of 16 knots; four old 12-in. guns of low calibre; obsolete 6-in. quick-firing guns, tolerably useful at a range of about 9,000 yards. Yet even this assistance—whatever it might have been worth—was denied to Cradock, because a series of defects in the engine-room caused the Canopus to remain behind at Port Stanley when he left that port at the end of October.

#### **THE COMING OF VON SPEE**

**A**T the first sign of dawn next morning (i.e. December 8), coaling began in all ships of the squadron, other than the Bristol and Glasgow, who had completed the previous evening.

The Kent took up the position of guardship outside the harbour of Port William. Two hours' work in the Invincible and Inflexible yielded some 400 tons each. Then came an interval for a well-earned breakfast. The third-cup-of-coffee-and-marmalade stage was being reached when a signalman dashed down to the ward-room and, with praiseworthy efforts to preserve his official calm, reported that one of the shore signal stations, Sapper Hill, had sighted two foreign men-of-war. In a few minutes the news was confirmed and three more ships were reported to the southward. Next they were finally identified as being the German China Squadron. In truth here was Admiral von Spee and his squadron steaming right into the jaws of the lion.

**O**UT of touch by wireless since he left Valparaiso, von Spee had dawdled down the coast and round the Cape to the Falklands, never dreaming for an instant that two powerful battle-cruisers had been detached with the special object of meeting him.

Amidst loud cheers the captain gave the order to "cast off colliers." Then followed the thrilling notes of the bugle call, "Action." At the same time the whole squadron was ordered to raise steam for full speed with all despatch. As guardship, the Kent had steam up, and this cruiser was directed to observe and report the enemy's movements.

When within fifteen miles of the Falklands, von Spee, who was flying his flag in the Scharnhorst, sent the Gneisenau and Nürnberg ahead to a distance of less than six miles from the harbour for the purpose of reconnoitring, while he himself, with the other ships, remained approximately eight miles off. According to the statement made subsequently by prisoners from the Gneisenau, it appears that the sub-lieutenant who had been sent

aloft with powerful glasses to ascertain what British ships were in the harbour, reported to his captain that there were two battle-cruisers and five other cruisers anchored there.

Such a statement sounded absolutely incredible to the captain, until a senior lieutenant, the gunnery officer, who was next sent up, confirmed the first report. The presence of Dreadnought cruisers was thus placed beyond all doubt, and the fact could only be explained on the assumption of their being Japanese battle-cruisers, and here is to be found the explanation of the myth industriously circulated by the English press, to the effect that Japanese ships were present at the battle of the Falkland Islands.

### THREE UNWELCOME SURPRISES

**I**N any case, the enemy had an unwelcome surprise. It was for the Gneisenau to receive the second unpleasant shock, when a report was heard and two 12-in. shells, about 9.20 a.m., dropped quite close to her, apparently from nowhere, but in reality the result of indirect fire from the Canopus, which lay obscured from seaward by an intervening hill. Controlled from a D.P.F. erected ashore, the Canopus' guns fired one more salvo of three shells. This bombardment the Germans imagined to come from a concealed land battery and thus received their third surprise.

To experience three such shocks at a comparatively early hour was something altogether too much for them. Von Spee recalled his two ships, and the whole squadron promptly took to their heels at maximum speed—probably about 21 knots—and steered in an easterly direction. They were closely shadowed by the Kent, who remained at a suitable distance and reported their movements, until the fleet had steam up and could chase their quarry.

**I**T was 9.45 when we left harbour, on a glorious morning with a bright sun, almost dead calm and the clearest atmosphere. So great was the visibility, that on clearing the entrance of the harbour we were able at once to take the range of the enemy, the tops of whose masts and funnels were just above the horizon. The distance was found to be 38,000 yards, i.e. nineteen sea miles, or nearly twenty-two land miles.

With their superior speed, the two battle-cruisers rapidly forged ahead of the older ships; and then, easing down at 11.15 o'clock, waited for the others to close up. Admiral Sturdee, however, in order not to lose the advantage of fine weather conditions, cracked on once more about 12.20, working up to 25 knots or more. Fully convinced that our lighter craft could deal with them, he ignored the smaller German cruisers, and his sole determination was to force an action on the Scharnhorst and Gneisenau as soon as possible.



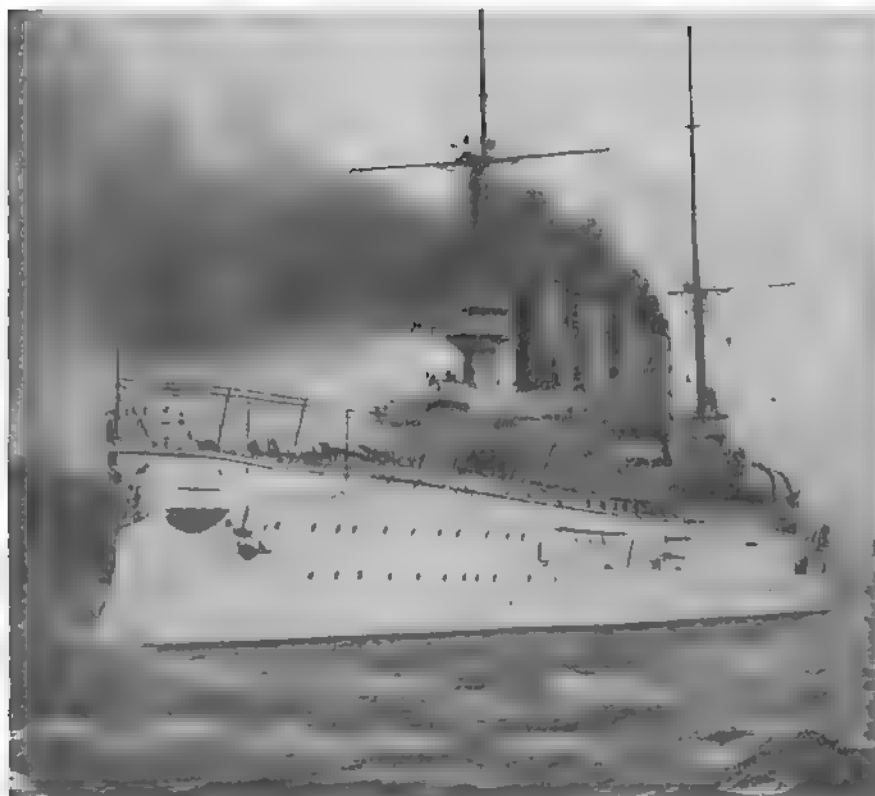
Russell

### VICTOR OF FALKLAND AND HIS BATTLE - CRUISERS

Sir Doveton Sturdee, above, was chief of the War Staff at the Admiralty when news of Sir Christopher Cradock's defeat at Coronel was received. Two battle-cruisers, the Invincible and Inflexible, were detached from the Grand Fleet and Admiral Sturdee hoisted his flag in the Invincible as "Commander-in-Chief in the South Atlantic and Pacific." Right, the Invincible and Inflexible are seen from another ship of Admiral Sturdee's squadron in actual pursuit of von Spee just before the stirring incidents described in Admiral Bingham's narrative.

Imperial War Museum

**S**oon after 1 o'clock, at a range of 17,000 yards, "A" turret (under my charge) got the order to fire a sighting shot at the Leipzig, the enemy's rear cruiser. Giving the guns their maximum elevation, I fired; and the result was short. The next round, fired at a distance of about 16,500 yards, nearly hit the Leipzig, who thereupon turned away with Nürnberg and Dresden to the S.W. These light cruisers were at once followed by Glasgow, Kent, and Cornwall. The fire of the Invincible and Inflexible was then directed on the Scharnhorst, who rapidly came into range. The effect of this was that the Scharnhorst turned eight points to port—in



#### **SHE WAS SUNK WITH ALL HANDS**

The Scharnhorst, seen above, Admiral von Spee's flagship when he scoured the South Atlantic before meeting defeat at the battle of the Falkland Islands, was an armoured cruiser of 11,420 tons and a sister ship of the Gneisenau, seen in the opposite page. When the Scharnhorst took her last headlong dive, as described in this page, not a soul of her crew could be rescued, for the Gneisenau was still demanding all the attention of Admiral Sturdee's ships.

other words, took a right-angled turn to the left. We followed suit, and thus, at 1.30, on parallel courses and at a distance of 16,000 yards, the action between the two pairs of large cruisers commenced.

**W**ITHIN a few minutes the Scharnhorst and Gneisenau, who were obviously concentrating on the Invincible, made a good start by hitting us at 1.45 with their third salvo. We then sheered off a couple of points, thereby throwing the Germans off their range, and the Inflexible followed our motions. The fire then opened rather rapidly, and the enemy at 2.10 made an attempt to get away by turning ten points to starboard. This caused a lull in the action from 2.15 until 2.45. At 2.45 we again opened fire on them; the enemy replied at 2.55. From now until 3.15 p.m. the fighting was very fierce, the range decreasing to 10,000 yards. Both the Scharnhorst and Gneisenau were hit several times. The Scharnhorst, on fire forward, slackened her rate of fire, and accurate shooting was not maintained. Between 3.15 and 3.30 our ship was so hampered by funnel and gun smoke that Admiral

Sturdee was obliged to turn his ships in a complete circle to rid himself of this nuisance. The Scharnhorst, seeing this turn, made a fresh attempt to withdraw from the action, or perhaps it was to bring her other broadside into action; in any case, she turned ten points away from us. However, once clear of smoke, we with our superior speed drew up into gun range, and fighting recommenced with all its former vigour.

#### **CRIPPLING A GIANT**

**F**ROM 3.30 onwards the Scharnhorst was being badly hit; it was noticed that in many parts of the hull fires were breaking out, and that two of the four funnels were missing. With this came an encouraging message from the captain, who told me down the voice-pipe that my turret was hitting well; personally I had observed two well-placed shots land successively just above the water-line, abreast of where the second funnel ought to have been.

At first I found it a little difficult to differentiate between the flash of the enemy's guns and one's own hits, but observation soon enlightened me on the fact that when you really strike home

on a ship you see a little red glow, or in the case of lyddite a cloud of yellow smoke, suddenly appear.

Admiral Sturdee reports that, notwithstanding the punishment the Scharnhorst was receiving, her fire was steady and accurate, and the persistency of her salvos was remarkable.

At 3.50 p.m. the German flagship was looking pretty sickly; practically motionless, fires everywhere, and only one funnel still standing.

#### **SCHARNHORST DIVES TO THE BOTTOM**

**F**INALLY, at 4.4 p.m., she rolled quietly over on one side, lay on her beam ends, and took a headlong dive, bows first, at 4.17 p.m.

This news I conveyed to my men in the four different chambers of the turret by means of the voice-pipe, and through the same channel could be heard the echoes of the cheering that rose from the very bowels of the ship. In a modern naval action, where all men are well down under armour, those who actually witness events do not amount to more than two score out of a complement of 990, and of a turret's crew of forty only four actually see the fight, viz., the two gun-layers, the turret trainer, and the range-taker, the remainder being distributed in the gunhouse, the working chamber, the magazine- and shell-room.

**T**HE Gneisenau, who had been following the Scharnhorst, continued to concentrate her fire on us, leaving to their fate any possible survivors from her sister ship. Under the circumstances, any life-saving was out of the question, and not a soul from the Scharnhorst survived.

Now pitted against the Inflexible and ourselves, the solitary Gneisenau fought a losing fight for nearly two hours. Admiral Sturdee in his report says: "At 4.47 the Gneisenau was hit severely. At 5.8 p.m. she was evidently in serious straits, and her fire slackened very much. Three ships—Invincible, Inflexible, Carnarvon—were concentrating on her from different bearings. At 5.15 she hit the Invincible; this was her last effective effort."

At 5.30 p.m. she was scarcely moving, with two funnels gone and several fires ablaze. A quarter of an hour later the Gneisenau stopped firing, having expended all ammunition, including even practice projectiles.

Almost on the stroke of 6 o'clock the Gneisenau rolled over and dived down in precisely the same way as her sister before her.

The survivors, running over the uppermost side, threw themselves into



the water, while the British ships steamed up at full speed to the spot, a few minutes ago the cradle of a proud ship, and now only marked by oil, wreckage, and masses of struggling humanity. Every available boat was lowered, and while the Invincible and Inflexible each picked up 108 and sixty-two survivors respectively, the Carnarvon—who had by now joined up—saved twenty. The survivors included the commander of the Gneisenau and about fifteen officers.

I WENT away in one of the cutters and succeeded in picking up about forty survivors, most of them in a wounded condition, and all in various stages of exhaustion; and small wonder! for the ship in her last stages must have been a very hell on earth. Anyhow, it was a gruesome business for the rescuers.

A word must now be said about the doings of the smaller cruisers, who had

been left behind when the battle-cruisers made their final spurt after the Scharnhorst and Gneisenau. But as the Bristol and Otranto have already been dealt with, there remain only the Kent, Glasgow, and Cornwall.

THESE three confined themselves to chasing the enemy's three light cruisers which we left steaming to the S.W. More specifically, the Glasgow and Cornwall hunted the Leipzig, the Kent chased the Nürnberg, while with the advantages of speed and a good start, the Dresden got clear away.

Very different was the fate of the Leipzig and Nürnberg, who were both sunk with colours flying, after a stern chase and gallant resistance, which in the case of the latter ship was prolonged right up to the last moment of daylight.

Probably the Kent had reason to be most proud of herself on account of an extraordinary feat performed by her

#### BEFORE HER VICTORY AND AFTER HER DEFEAT

The last port at which Admiral von Spee's squadron coaled before Coronel was Valparaíso, and, left, the Gneisenau is seen, spick and span, leaving the port. Then came the victory of November 1 over Sir Christopher Cradock's squadron, to be followed on December 8 by defeat at the Falkland Islands, when the Gneisenau went down fighting. The very dramatic photograph below, taken from the forecassle of H.M.S. Invincible, shows the scene immediately after the Gneisenau had sunk, with the Inflexible in the background. The boats of the two battle-cruisers are rescuing the crew of the enemy ship.

*Imperial War Museum; photograph by Paymaster Sub-Lieutenant Duckworth, R.N.*







#### THE KENT'S RIVEN ARMOUR

During her hot fight with the Nürnberg, H.M.S. Kent suffered surprisingly little damage. Though she was hit 38 times, only one shell pierced a casemate, as seen above. This shell ignited some cartridges, the resulting casualties numbering ten men.

*Imperial War Museum*

engine-room staff, who managed to get 23 knots out of a 22-knot ship that had been serving thirteen years.

THE captain's racy account, as he gave it to me a few days later, of what they did and how they did it, deserves to be quoted in full: "We sat on the safety-valves and forced the boilers fit to bust. We ran short of coal, so we burnt any spare wood left in the ship. About 6 p.m. we got within range. The Nürnberg started hitting us before we could hit her, so we went at it hammer and tongs. When it was getting dark, I closed to between two and three thousand yards. This paid me very well, because I had 6-in. guns against his 4-in., and I found the closer I was gettin' the better I was hittin'. We put her down at 7.15, almost in the

dark. It was a devilish good scrap."

After this performance, it was not surprising to find his name among the list of C.B.'s.

After the battle the squadron spent a fruitless and wearisome three days in searching for the Dresden, until the rapidly depleting coal supply rendered a return to the Falklands imperative. It was December 11 when we re-entered Port Stanley.

There was now time to take general stock of damages and casualties sustained by the different ships of the squadron. The Invincible was hit no fewer than twenty-two times, but only twice below the water-line. Of these two hits, one shell penetrated beneath the armour belt and exploded in a hundred-ton coal bunker alongside the magazine of the midship turret. The extra plating, however, between the two compartments withstood the explosion, and the shell merely expended itself in the bunker, which instantly flooded. To right matters, the corresponding bunker on the other side of the ship had only to be flooded. The other shell hit us point-blank on the stem and filled the collision compartment in the bows. The remaining shells were distributed

over the upper and mess decks, and most of them burst without doing anything more than superficial damage.

Our ward-room mess, which we had left a few hours ago in all the amenity of an English breakfast-room, was completely wrecked. Tables, chairs, sideboards, and piano were now powdered to matchwood, and the whole had the appearance of a hay and straw yard. In truth there was nothing left standing.

AMONG the ruins of the piano there was found—not a tuning-fork, but one of our best electro-plated set that had been blown out of its green baize nest some thirty feet away.

One of the tripods belonging to the foremast was hit and broken. Yet the mast continued to stand happily on its

two remaining legs. A more convincing demonstration of the merits of their doctrine could not have been wished for by the advocates of the tripod-mast.

ANOTHER of the enemy's 8.2 shells found its way into the Admiral's "still-room," where it lay comfortably amongst his jams and refused to burst. Nicely burnished, this shell became the most valued trophy and cherished ornament of the ward-room flat.

But the amazing feature of the whole affair was that there were no casualties whatever, with the solitary exception of Commander Townsend, who received from a splinter a slight wound in his tendon Achilles and was thereby compelled to remain on the sick list for a few weeks. Such good fortune was doubtless attributable to that organization and distribution of personnel which the turret system demands.

That the Inflexible had been hit only three times seems to indicate that the Germans had bestowed the greater part of their attention upon the Invincible.

The Kent received thirty-eight hits—as was to be expected from the close range at which her action was fought—but sustained no damage in any vital spot. Nevertheless, this ship had the misfortune to lose the greater part of a gun's crew belonging to a 6-in. casemate by the bursting of one of the Nürnberg's shells, which by sheer bad luck entered the casemate through the gun-port and accounted for six lives and four wounded.

#### VICTORY WITHOUT PRICE

THE Cornwall was hit eighteen times, but received no casualties. The Glasgow was hit twice; she had one man killed and four wounded.

The Carnarvon received no damage; in fact, she was never hit. Though affiliated to us during the action, that cruiser had no opportunity of displaying her potential worth or of showing what she could have done if chance had pitted her against ships of the same calibre. The opportunity was also taken to effect temporary repairs of the worst shell holes in the various decks.

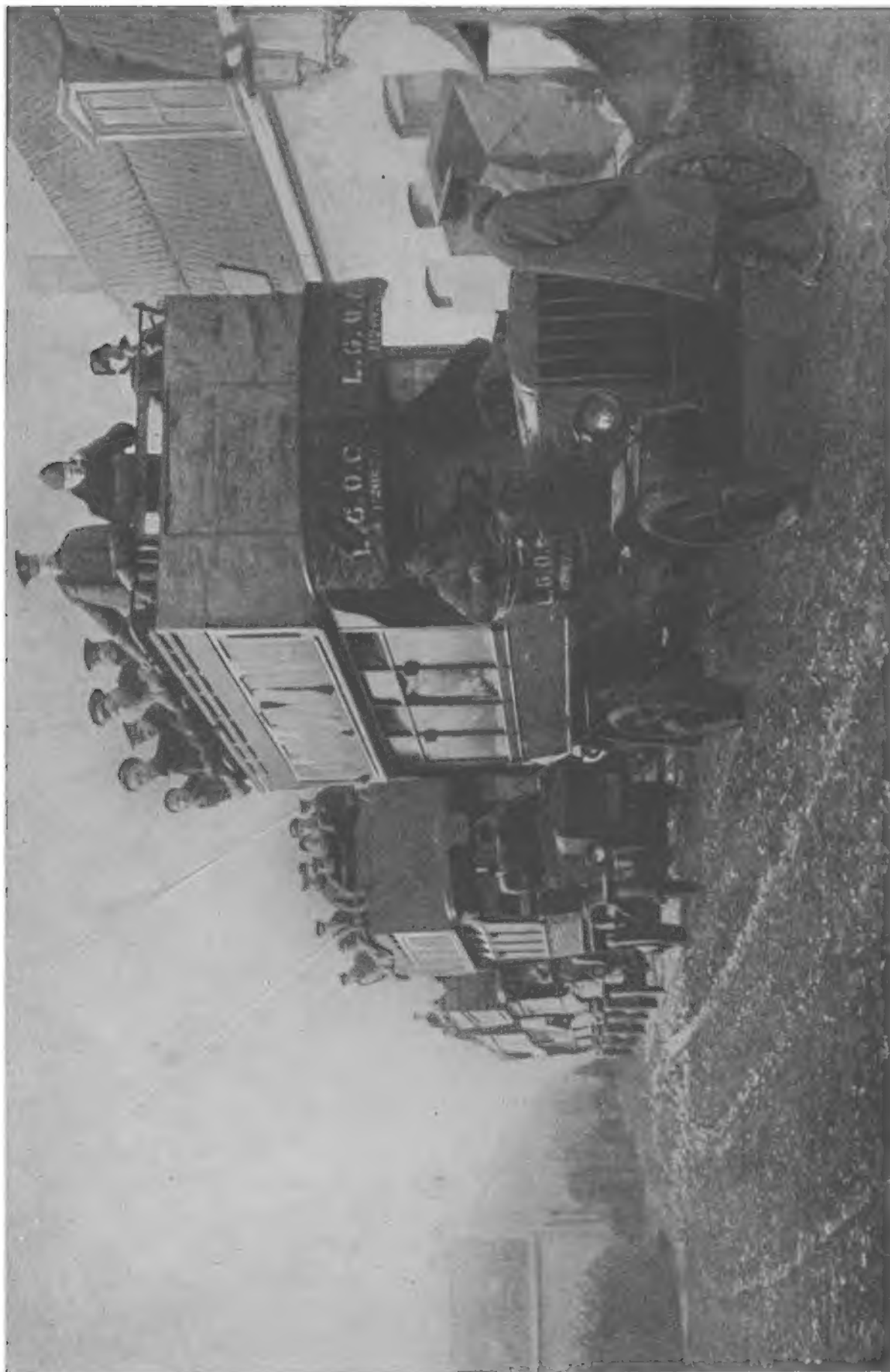
No words can paint the delirious joy manifested by the inhabitants of the Falkland Islands when they heard the good news. There was now once and for all an end to their worst fears and apprehensions. Nor were they lacking in giving vent to what they felt; not only in words, but in unlimited quantities of flowers and fruit. In return, we presented them with a souvenir in the shape of a piece of our shattered steel mast, burnished and mounted on oak with a suitable inscription underneath.



*Sport & General*

#### **FROM FIRING LINE TO PRISON CAMP**

The British soldiers shown above appear to be cheerfully resigned to their fate in having been captured and confined in a German prison camp in 1914, and several of them have turned to the solace of tobacco as they stand disarmed and no longer in the fray. But as the months and years passed and the war still raged, the lot of the prisoners grew progressively worse, with disease, want, and mind-weariness playing frightful havoc among thousands of brave men.



# **NO FARES COLLECTED ON THESE BUSES**

A large number of omnibuses from the London streets were sent to France and Flanders in the autumn of 1914 to be used as transport for the troops. Here, on November 6, during the first battle of Ypres, a convoy of them is passing through Dickebusch towards Ypres, loaded with men of the 2nd Battalion of the Warwickshire Regiment. The bright lines which were familiar in the London streets were painted out and the glass windows replaced by sacking or boarding as they became broken. "Old Bill," the famous survivor of this remarkable fleet, is an omnibus of the type seen above.

## Leaves from the Editor's Note-Book

(Continued from page 11 of this wrapper)

**L**ET me renew my invitation, then, to any friend or survivor of the fighting forces who is able to establish the identity of any man from a photograph in our pages, to write to me with such details as may be thought of interest to our readers.

**S**OME controversy has been going on in the columns of our contemporary, the *Daily Telegraph*, concerning the first V.C. of the Great War. Claims have been made for one soldier in particular, Lieutenant M. J. Dease, but it does not seem to have been noticed that in one sense there was no "first" V.C. at all! It happens that I had already, before this correspondence started, said so in page 66 of Part 2 of *I WAS THERE*, where I think the difficulty is cleared up quite definitely. There were in fact four "first" V.C.s on the first day of the actual fighting, Sunday, August 23, 1914. Their names and gallant deeds are:

Lt. M. J. DEASE, 4th Royal Fusiliers,  
for machine-gun action at St. Ghislain  
Lt./Cpl. C. A. JARVIS, R.E.,  
blowing up Jamappes Bridge under  
fire

Pte. S. F. GODLEY, 4th Royal Fusiliers,  
assisting Lt. Dease  
Captain THEODORE WRIGHT, R.E.,  
blowing up Mons-Condé canal bridges  
under fire

**A**S I have stated in the page referred to, two of these men, Private Godley and Lance-Corporal Jarvis, survived the War. The most reasonable basis for attributing priority is surely the date of the deed which won the Cross, and I suggest therefore it is a case of "bracketed first" in alphabetical

order. If time is considered as well as date, Lt. Dease and Pte. Godley are still bracketed together, their action having been fought about 2 p.m., while the bridges were blown up after 4 p.m. No other basis can establish true priority. The first actual awards by the King (including Lance-Corporal Jarvis) were made on November 17, while notification in the *London Gazette* was comparatively arbitrary so far as date was concerned, the first in order in the Army List being the V.C. which was won as late as September 3, 1914.

**F**URTHER there was a fifth V.C. which was won in part on the same day. Corporal C. E. Garforth of the 15th Hussars cut wire under fire, and so enabled his squadron to escape the enemy. A little later he carried a wounded man out of action, and finally, on September 3rd, saved the life of a sergeant whose horse had been shot. For these gallant actions the King gave him the V.C. on November 17, along with Corporal Jarvis. It was, I think, partly because some V.C.s were actually bestowed by the King in advance of others that the whole muddle about priority has arisen.

**M**Y readers will have noted, no doubt, that the day of publication has been given in these Note-Book pages as Thursday in earlier Parts. At the last moment, owing to the dreadful threat of war at the beginning of October, it was found necessary to change the publishing day to Tuesday.

### To Make Sure of Getting Your Copy Give Your Newsagent a FIRM ORDER FOR THE COMPLETE SERIES NOW

Part 7 of The Great War: I Was There! Will Contain:

#### SECTION VII. LAST DAYS OF THE FIRST YEAR

**BRITISH PLUCK AND LUCK AT THE  
HARTLEPOOLS: Britain's First Bom-  
bardment in 250 Years**

From The Royal Tank Corps Journal

**I FOUGHT AT YPRES FROM THE SKY  
Story of the First Ground Strafing**

Lt.-Col. L. A. Strange, D.S.O.

**I SAW BEATTY TRIUMPH**

The Blücher Sunk at Dogger Bank

By An Officer of H.M.S. Aurora

**AMAZING ARMISTICE!—The Historic  
Christmas Truce of 1914**

Capt. Sir Edward Hulse, Bart., Scots  
Guards

#### SECTION VIII. THE NEUVE CHAPELLE BATTLE

**THE SERGEANT WHO WENT THE WRONG  
WAY—The Tragic and the Comic in  
Trench Life**

Private Frank Richards

**STRIKING Double-Page PLATE: KINGLY MEMORIES of TWENTY YEARS**  
Three British Kings on the Field and at the Cenotaph

61 Illustrations Including Many New and Unpublished Photographs  
of Scenes of the Battles of Ypres and Neuve Chapelle, and Fighting by Air and Sea

**EIGHT ART PAGES IN DUOTONE**



# AN EDITION OF DICKENS BEYOND COMPARE

The Great Author's "Favourite Edition"  
with ALL the Famous Dickens' Artists' Illustrations  
in 15 Facsimile Well-Bound Volumes

IMMEDIATE DELIVERY  
ALL 15 BOOKS & **2'6** FREE BOOKCASE  
First Payment



HERE IS  
YOUR GIFT  
BOOKCASE

The case is in solid oak, and measures  
3' high, 1 ft. wide, and 6 1/2 ins. deep.

NEVER BEFORE has so small a sum as 2/6 secured  
DELIVERY of so great a bargain as this—ALL  
DICKENS' WORKS—his "Favourite Edition" (fully  
illustrated)—and A PRESENTATION 3-TIER OAK  
BOOKCASE. POST THE COUPON (below) TODAY  
for a FREE DICKENS ART ALBUM describing this  
Great Offer to Readers of "I WAS THERE."

There have been many editions of Dickens published in  
recent years from a few shillings to many pounds, but  
there is none like this, the favourite edition of the world's  
best-loved author, the only edition that reproduces  
faithfully the type pages and illustrations chosen by  
himself.

**The Home Without Dickens is  
Like a Hearth Without a Fire**

DICKENS "MADE CHRISTMAS" with his "Christ-  
mas Carol" and other beautiful "Christmas  
Stories." He exposed and killed Bumbledom's treatment  
of the poor, and his story of Oliver Twist at the workhouse  
brought about the better feeding and treatment of boys  
and girls at poor law institutions and at the schools.  
Above all, Dickens taught the world the value of Goodwill  
and Good Cheer. No other books can rival Dickens'  
works. With these volumes in your home you will have  
a Life-Lasting Library of Entertainment—for yourself  
and every member of your family.

Fifteen large volumes of Reading and Pictures of 2,000  
unforgettable "Characters"—grave and gay—foolish and  
wise—humorous and lugubrious—generous and mean—in  
fact, "all sorts and conditions" of extraordinarily enter-  
taining men, women and young folk. You could not  
make a better investment for yourself or your home than  
a set of this favourite edition of the great author's works.

**GOLDEN OAK GIFT BOOKCASE**  
Presented **FREE** to every subscriber

Fill in and post the Coupon  
at right, and we will send  
you a FREE 8-page prospectus  
giving full details of this  
marvellous edition, together  
with a superb FREE presen-  
tation portrait of the author

**NOTE:** If you do not wish  
to cut this copy,  
please send a postcard  
mentioning "I WAS  
THERE," Part 6.

**Send Today**

Here is Life-Long  
Home Entertain-  
ment For You and  
All Your Family

Vol.

- 1—The Pickwick Papers
- 2—Nicholas Nickleby
- 3—Martin Chuzzlewit
- 4—The Old Curiosity Shop
- Reprinted Pieces
- 5—Barnaby Rudge
- Hard Times
- 6—Sketches by Boz
- Oliver Twist
- 7—Dombey and Son
- 8—David Copperfield
- 9—Bleak House
- 10—Little Dorrit
- 11—Christmas Books
- Pictures from Italy
- American Notes
- 12—A Tale of Two Cities
- Great Expectations
- 13—Our Mutual Friend
- 14—The Uncommercial Traveller
- A Child's History of England
- 15—Christmas Stories
- Edwin Drood, Etc.

"I WAS THERE"  
FREE BOOKCASE COUPON

(Post in 3d. stamped UNSEALED envelope.)

To The WAYERLEY BOOK CO., LIMITED,  
96 and 97, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

Please send presentation portrait of Dickens, together with FREE  
booklet describing the Gift Bookcase and the "Favourite Edition"  
of Dickens' works, also full particulars of very easy terms of subscription  
purchase.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

I.W.T. 6.....